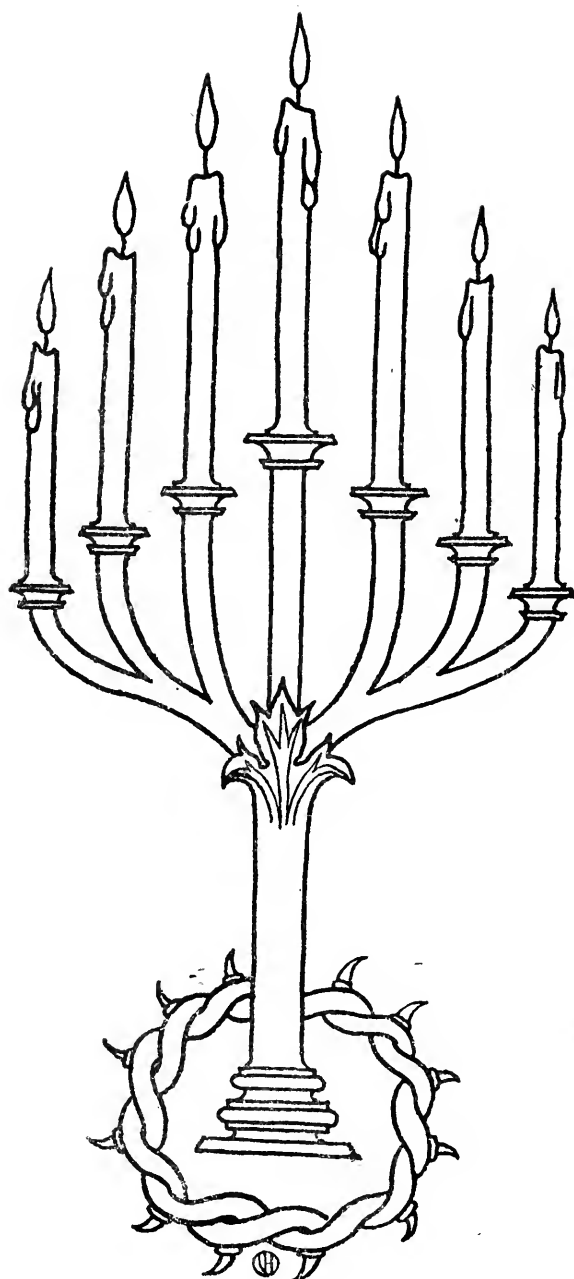


BALLADS
WEIRD AND
WONDERFUL
WITH 25 DRAWINGS BY
VERNON HILL



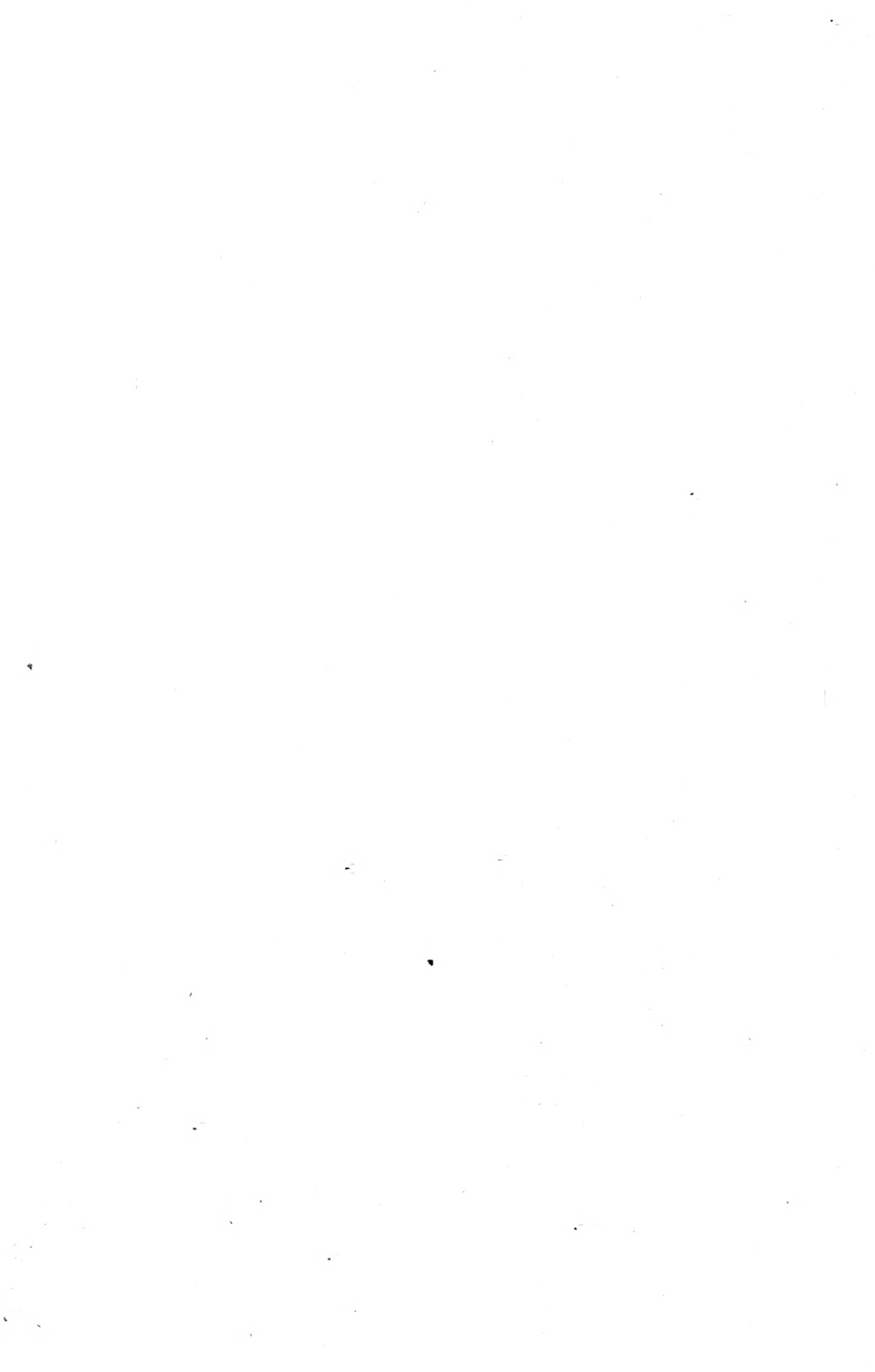


The Bancroft Library

University of California • Berkeley

Gift of

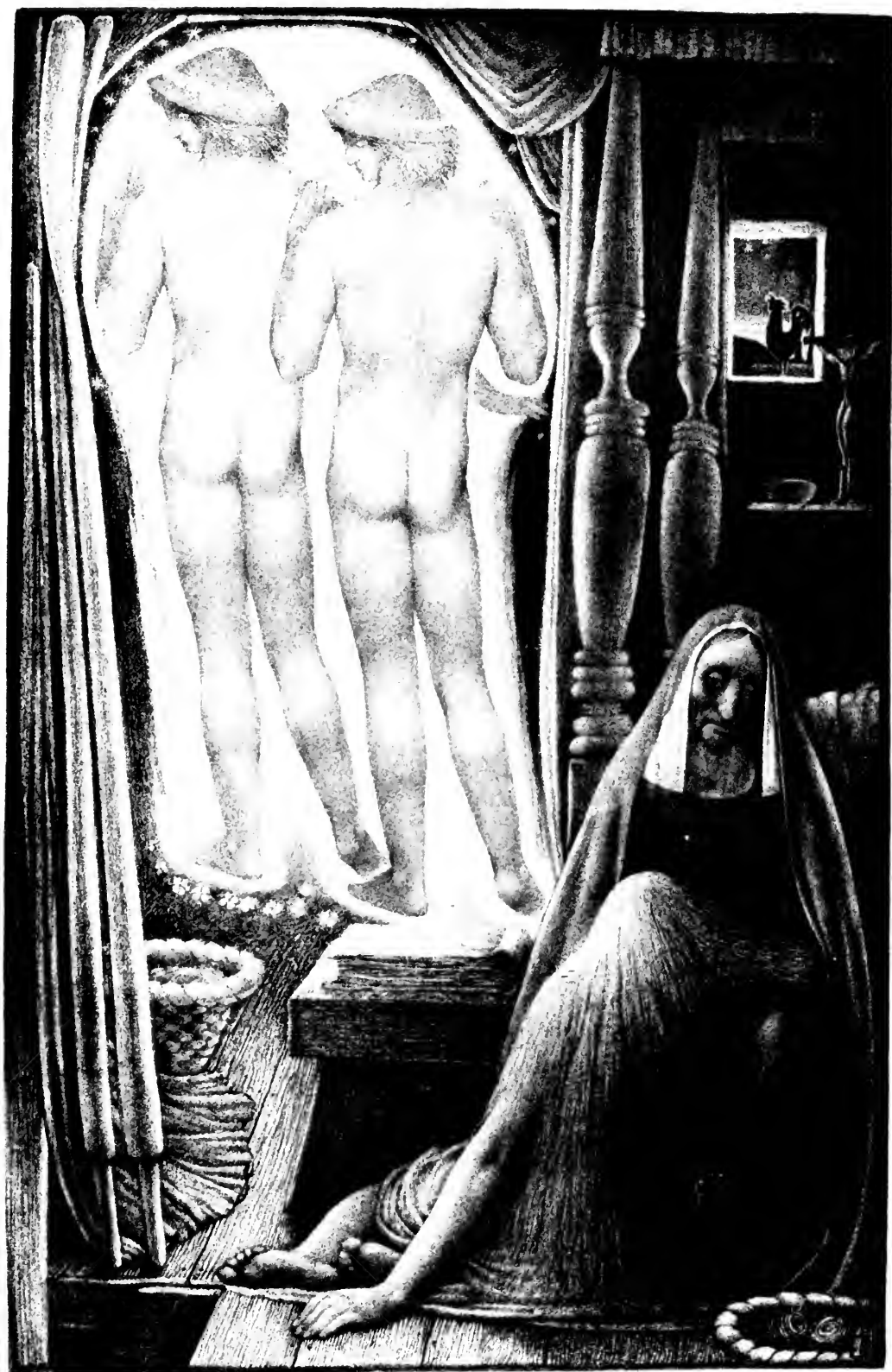
MILDRED BISSINGER



BALLADS WEIRD
AND WONDERFUL.

*This Edition is limited to Five Hundred
copies for sale in England and the United
States of America.*

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation



BALLADS WEIRD·AND·WONDERFUL

WITH 25 DRAWINGS BY
VERNON HILL



JOHN LANE LONDON·THE BODLEY HEAD·
JOHN LANE COMPANY·NEW YORK MDCCCXII

All rights reserved

Printed by BALLANTYNE, HANSON & Co.
At the Ballantyne Press, Edinburgh.

PREFACE

THE scope of this book is sufficiently indicated by its title. The quality of the illustrations is not so patent, and for this reason I venture to claim attention from readers and critics in this introductory note.

Naturally, this is not a general collection of legendary ballads, and the slightly hackneyed themes of love and romance, so well known to us all, have not been touched upon in a volume intended only to deal with the weird and wonderful. Elves and fairies, demons and witches run riot through these pages and dance through the pictures. Here we have a revel of the bizarre, the whimsical, the extraordinary. Ballads of this type have a peculiar flavour of their own, which can be neither defined nor imitated, and they are, therefore, easily separable from the others. The subjects, moreover, are so strictly limited in number that it

Preface

is thought the present collection contains typical specimens of all the best ballads of this character. They have not been taken from any single source, but many different versions have been consulted, and it is hoped that the resulting compilation gives the best obtainable.

Such a selection, it is believed, has not previously been published, but it was suggested as being peculiarly adapted to the genius of the artist of *The Arcadian Calendar* and *The New Inferno*. The result has more than justified the editor's expectations.

An artist who is not limited to the actual things of life, whose fancy is not confined within the limits of a green field or a marble column—who, indeed, can see visions—whose inner life is not of our life but of a strange occult devising, is impelled irresistibly towards the supernatural (though the word supernatural in connection with art should not be held only as indicating conditions above or below nature, but completely outside of and distinct from nature). Perhaps it is a lack of recognition of these several circumstances that causes us to

Preface

condemn as morbid and decadent things which we are not in a position to judge. The word decadent is at once the most misused and the most overworked word in the English language. Any design that is not conventional, any picture that does not make an instant appeal by its prettiness—and that mere obvious prettiness the eye can take in completely at a glance—is liable to be misrepresented as decadent.

Mr. Hill's extraordinary art is neither conventional nor imitative. This is its great drawback. The desire to give every artist a professional pedigree confounds and irritates the mind that is accustomed to adjudicate in, and from, compartments: the mind that with a littleness of understanding is confused from its inability popularly to classify the subject criticised. In the same way there is a habit, proceeding from a mental obsession as much as from a spiritual blindness, to place every new poet as a legitimate or illegitimate descendant of Tennyson, Browning, or Wordsworth. And a new humourist is usually patted on the shoulder as a relative, though poor, of Thackeray, or Dickens,

Preface

or Mark Twain. Mr. Hill is in this position: I have indicated rather than described it. There is in his work a suggestion of Blake, of Beardsley, and of Flaxman. There is something, perhaps, of Blake in the conception of Mr. Hill; there may be a touch of Flaxman in the execution; and possibly a trace of the exquisite delicate line of Beardsley in the symphonious whole. But what artist would deliberately choose to follow Blake, that most erratic genius? The Flaxman influence is even less significant. And Beardsley is dragged in more because Mr. Hill challenges Beardsley than that he follows him. But in any case it is no small compliment to an artist that he should be compared with three men of such talent. He is fortunately opposed to the gospel of the obvious—not in the flimsy manner of the post-impressionists, but with the lavish decoration of the master hand. These designs for *Ballads Weird and Wonderful* are indeed not only illustrations but decorations: they touch the soul with pity and with terror; they have the quality, the peculiar quality, of forming in

Preface

the mind a permanent picture, long after the merely beautiful becomes an evanescent memory. Mr. Hill's work is such stuff as dreams are made of.

That Mr. Hill has been criticised for a certain morbid tendency is not altogether surprising. But it is impossible to produce designs for such a book without introducing a quality of grotesque, inverted melancholy. (This was most noticeable in Mr. Hill's very remarkable illustrations to *The New Inferno* of Mr. Stephen Phillips). I am strongly inclined to the belief that adverse criticism, on account of supposed morbidity, is usually produced by the modern habit of expressing a judgment of one thing in terms of another. Mendelssohn is condemned that his music does not noise like Wagner's; Mr. Abercrombie that his poetry has not Tennyson's smoothness; and it will never surprise me to see a book on political economy condemned as painfully deficient in humour ! Even if one is unable to analyse the dexterities and attainments of certain people and several things, it is at least easy to evade the points at issue by demonstrating

Preface

those qualities manifestly deficient, and that though such qualities would be incongruous in the persons or things criticised. And this artifice is without doubt superficially successful in concealing the intellectual poverty of the critic.

Certainly I shall be astounded if these wonderful drawings for *Ballads Weird and Wonderful* are not recognised as a triumph of modern art. Apart from their technique they reflect with marvellous fidelity the spirit of the ballads, the air of poetical mystery, the combination of the natural and the supernatural, the peculiar haunting beauty of the verses themselves.

R. P. CHOPE.

LONDON, *November 28, 1911.*

CONTENTS

	PAGE
THE WIFE OF USHER'S WELL	I
THE QUEEN OF ELFLAND'S NOURICE	5
THE DEMON LOVER	7
THE GREAT SEALCHIE OF SULE SKERRIE	11
ALISON GROSS	13
A LYKE-WAKE DIRGE	17
THE TWA CORBIES	19
KEMP OWYNE	21
THE FALCON	25
SWEET WILLIAM'S GHOST	27
YOUNG BENJIE	31
EDWARD, EDWARD	37
THE ELFIN KNIGHT	41
TRUE THOMAS	45
THE CRUEL MOTHER	51
TAMLANE	53
LORD THOMAS AND FAIR ANNET	61
THE CROODLIN' DOO	69
THE WATER O' WEARIE'S WELL	71

Contents

	PAGE
THE WEE, WEE MAN	75
HUGH OF LINCOLN	77
THE MERMAID	81
CLERK COLVILL	83
SIR ROLAND	87
WILLY'S LADY	93

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

THE WIFE OF USHER'S WELL

THERE liv'd a wife at Usher's Well,
And a wealthy wife was she ;
She had twa stout and stalwart sons,
And she sent them o'er the sea.

They hadna been a week frae her,
A week but barely ane,
When word came to the carline wife
That her twa sons were gane.

They hadna been a week frae her,
A week but barely three,
When word came to the carline wife
That her sons she'd never see.

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

“I wish the wind may never cease,
Nor freshes in the flood,
Till my twa sons come hame to me
In earthly flesh and blood!”

It fell about the Martinmas,
When the nights were lang and mirk,
When in and came her ain twa sons,
And their hats were o’ the birk.

It neither grew in syke nor ditch,
Nor yet in any sheugh;
But at the gates of Paradise
That birk grew fair eneugh.

“Blaw up the fire, now, maidens mine,
Bring water frae the well,
For all my house shall feast this night,
Since my twa sons are well.

“Oh, eat and drink, my merry men a’,
The better shall ye fare,
For my twa sons they are come hame
To me for evermair.”

The Wife of Usher's Well

And she has gane and made the bed,
 She's made it saft and fine ;
And she's happit them in her grey mantle,
 Because they were her ain.

Up then crew the red, red cock,
 And up and crew the gray ;
And the aulder to the younger said,
 " Brother, we maun away.

" The cock doth craw, the day doth daw,
 The channerin' worm doth chide ;
Gin we be missed out o' our place,
 A sair pain we maun bide."

Oh, it's they've ta'en up their mither's mantle,
 And they've hung it on a pin :
" Oh, lang may ye hing, my mither's mantle,
 Ere ye hap us again !

" Fare ye weel, my mither dear !
 Fareweel to barn and byre !
And fare ye weel, the bonny lass
 That kindles my mither's fire."





THE QUEEN OF ELFLAND'S NOURICE

"I HEARD a cow low, a bonnie cow low,
And a cow low down in yon glen;
Lang, lang will my young son greet
Or his mither bid him come ben.

"I heard a cow low, a bonnie cow low,
And a cow low down in yon fauld;
Lang, lang will my young son greet
Or his mither take him frae cauld.

"Waken, Queen of Elfland,
And hear your nourice moan."—

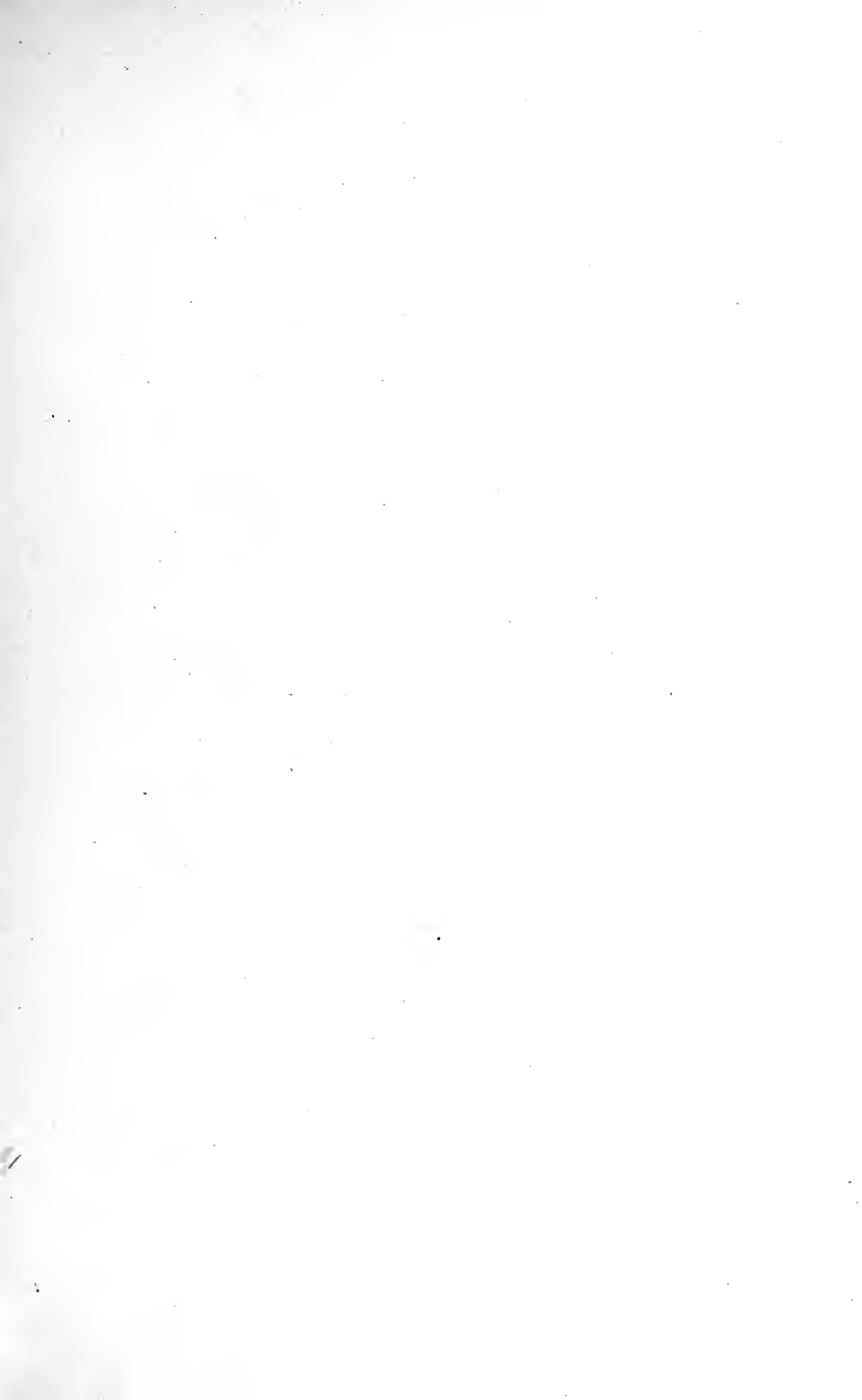
"O moan ye for your meat,
Or moan ye for your fee,
Or moan ye for your bounties
That ladies are wont to gie?"—

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

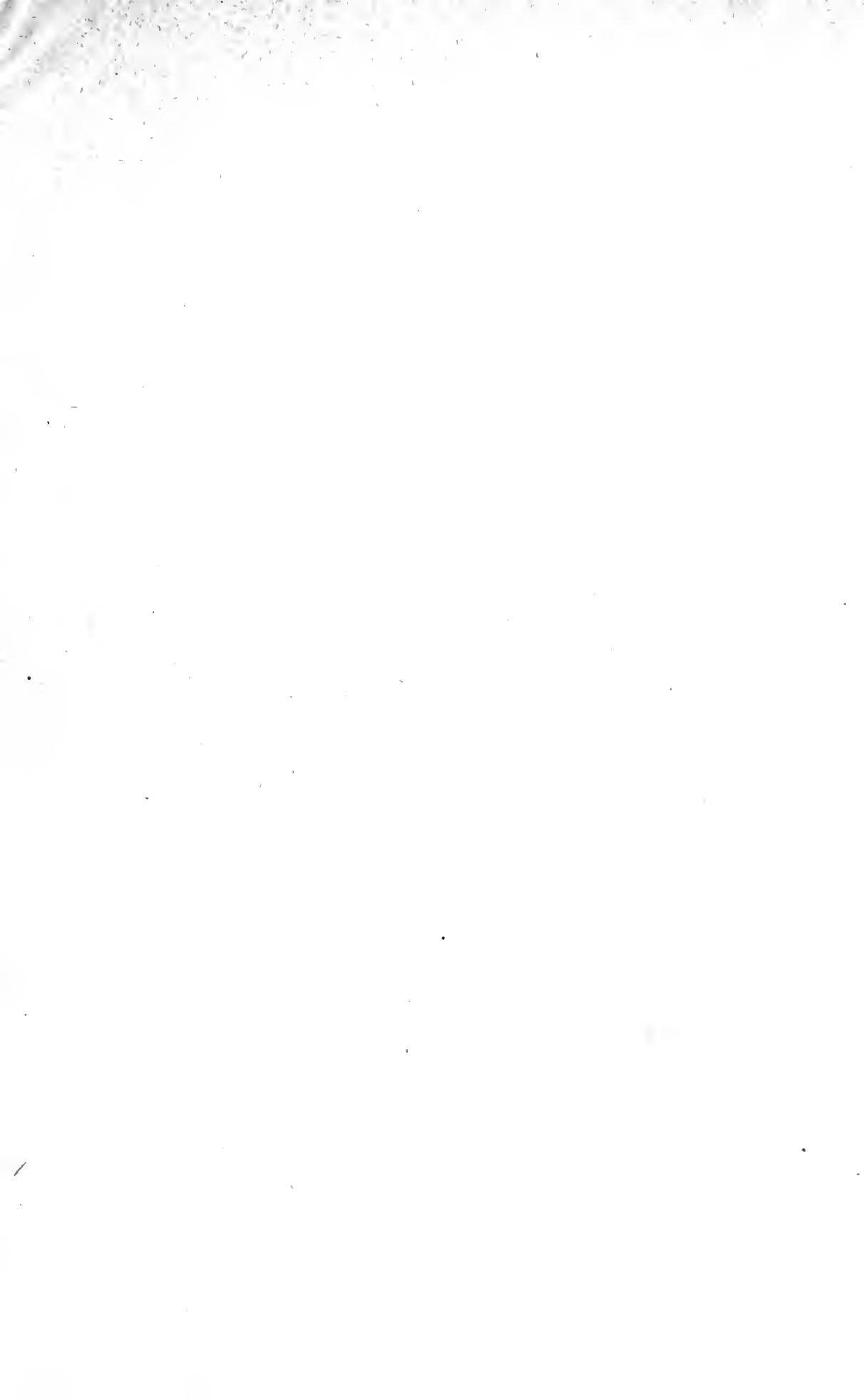
“I moan na for my meat,
Nor yet for my fee,
But I moan for Christen land—
It's there I fain would be.”—

“O nurse my bairn, nourice,
Till he stand at your knee,
An' ye'll win hame to Christen land,
Where fain it's ye would be.

“O keep my bairn, nourice,
Till he gang by the hauld,
An' ye'll win hame to your young son,
Ye left when four nights auld.”







THE DEMON LOVER

“O WHERE hae ye been, my lang-lost love,
This lang seven years and more?”—

“O I’m come to seek my former vows
Ye granted me before.”—

“O haud your tongue o’ your former vows,
For they will breed sad strife ;

O haud your tongue o’ your former vows,
For I am become a wife.”

He turn’d him right and round about,
And the tear blindit his ee ;

“I ne’er wad hae trodden on Irish ground,
If it hadna been for thee.

“Had I kenn’d that ere I cam here,
I ne’er had come to thee ;

I might hae had a king’s daughter,
Had it na been for love o’ thee.”—

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

“If ye might hae had a king’s daughter,
Yoursell ye hae to blame ;
Ye might hae taken the king’s daughter,
For ye kenn’d that I was nane.”—

“O fause are the vows o’ womankind,
But fair is their fause bodie ;
I ne’er wad hae trodden on Irish ground,
Had it na been for love o’ thee.”—

“If I was to leave my husband dear,
And my twa babes also,
O what hae ye got to keep me wi’,
If I should wi’ thee go ? ”—

“See ye not yon seven pretty ships,
The eighth brought me to land,
With merchandise and mariners
And wealth in ilka hand.”

Then she’s gane to her twa little babes,
Kiss’d them baith cheek and chin ;
Sae has she to her sleeping husband
And done the same to him.

The Demon Lover

She set her foot upon the ship,
No mariners could she behold ;
But the sails were o' the taffetie,
And the masts o' beaten gold.

They hadna sail'd a league, a league,
A league but barely three,
When dismal grew his countenance,
And drumly grew his ee.

The masts that were like beaten gold,
Bent not on the heaving seas ;
The sails that were o' taffetie,
Fill'd not in the east land breeze.

They hadna sail'd a league, a league,
A league but barely three,
Until she espied his cloven hoof,
And she wept right bitterlie.

“ O haud your tongue, my sprightly flower,
Let a' your moanin' be ;
I will show you how the lilies grow
On the banks of Italy.”—

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

"O what hills are yon, yon pleasant hills,
That the sun shines sweetly on?"—

"O yon are the hills o' heaven," he said,
"Where you will never win."—

"O whatten a mountain 's yon," she said,
"Sae dreary wi' frost and snow?"—

"O yon is the mountain o' hell," he cried,
"Where you and I will go."

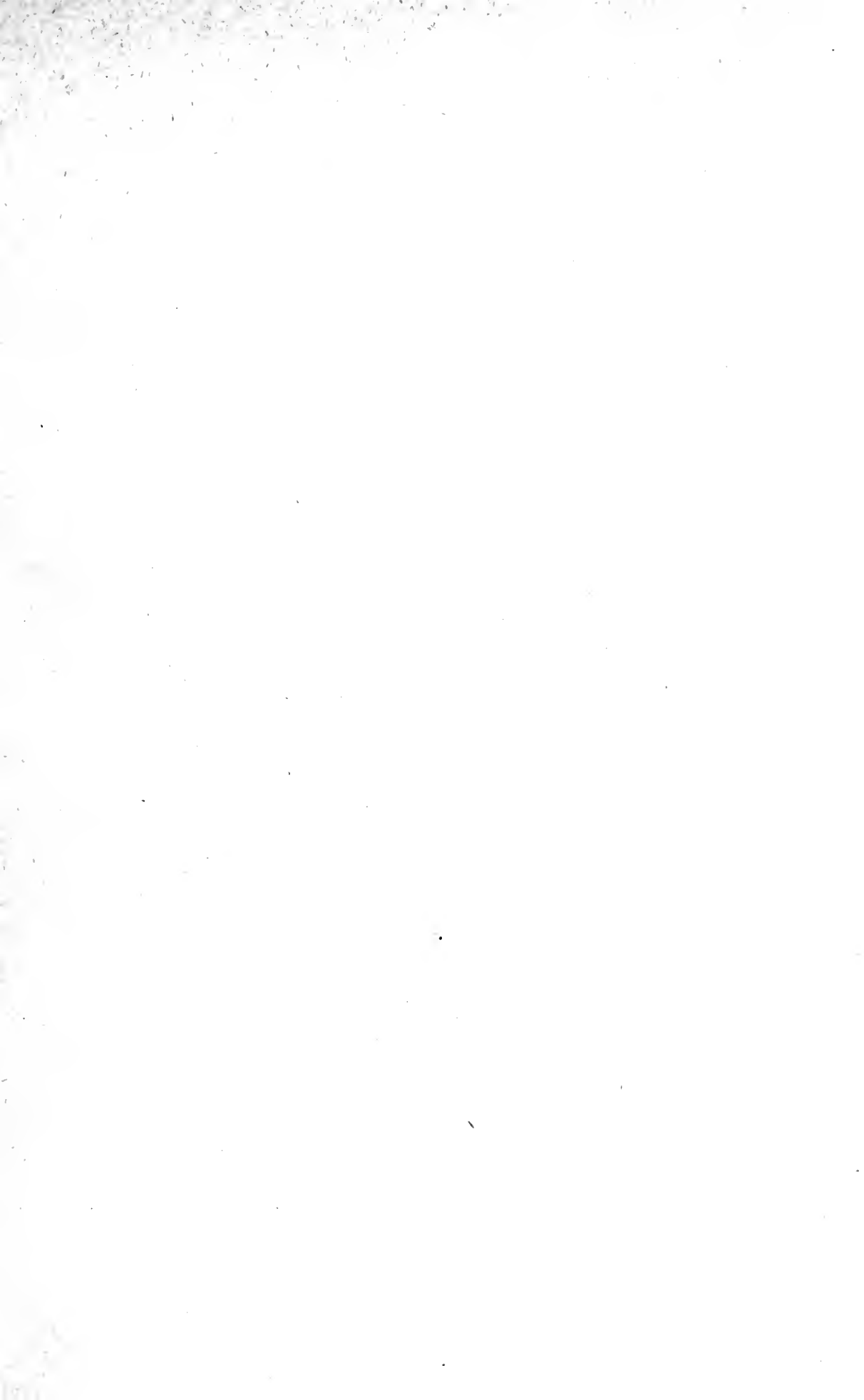
And aye when she turn'd her round about,
Aye taller he seem'd to be ;
Until that the tops o' that gallant ship
Nae taller were than he.

The clouds grew dark, and the winds grew loud,
And the tears fill'd her ee ;
And waesome wail'd the snaw-white sprites
Upon the gurly sea.

He strack the tapmast wi' his hand,
The foremast wi' his knee ;
And he brak that gallant ship in twain,
And sank her in the sea.







THE GREAT SEALCHIE OF SULE SKERRIE

AN earthly nourice sits and sings,
And aye she sings, "Ba, lily wean !
Little ken I my bairn's father,
Far less the land that he staps in."

Then ane arose at her bed-foot,
And a grumly guest I'm sure was he :
"Here am I, thy bairn's father,
Although I be not comèlie.

"I am a man upon the lan',
And I am a sealchie in the sea ;
And when I'm far and far frae lan',
My dwelling is in Sule Skerrie."—

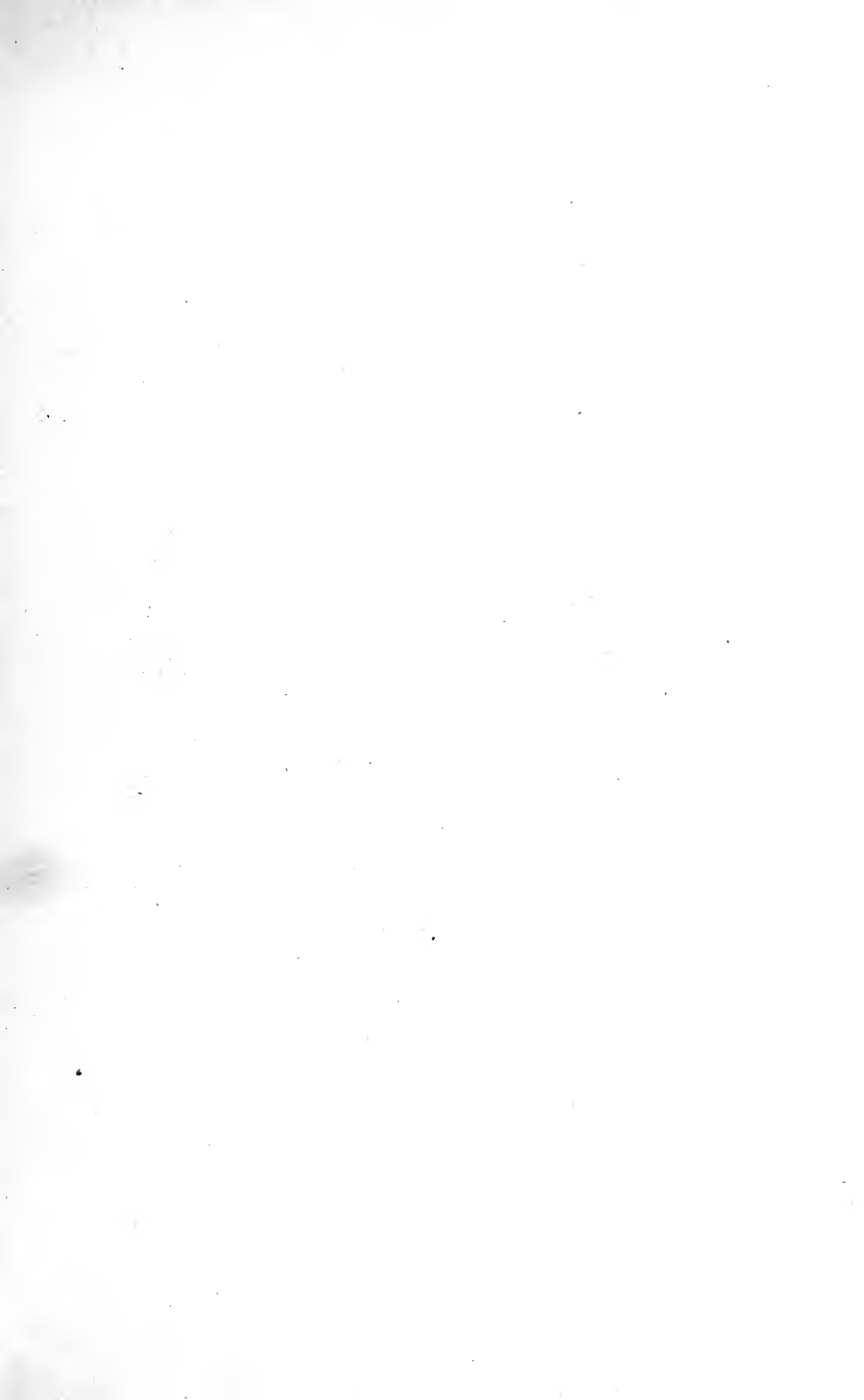
"It was na weel," quo' the maiden fair,
"It was na wèel, indeed," quoth she,
"That the Great Sealchie of Sule Skerrie
Should hae come and aught a bairn to me."

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

Now he has ta'en a purse of gowd,
And he has put it upon her knee,
Saying, "Gie to me my little young son,
And tak' thee up thy nourice-fee.

"And it shall pass on a summer's day,
When the sun shines hot on every stane,
That I will take my little young son,
And teach him for to swim the faem.

"And thou shalt marry a proud gunner,
And a proud gunner I'm sure he'll be,
And the very first shot that e'er he shoots,
He'll shoot baith my young son and me."





ALISON GROSS

O ALISON Gross, that lives in yon tower,
The ugliest witch in the north countrie,
She trysted me ae day up to her bower,
And mony fair speeches she made to me.

She strok'd my head, and she kemb'd my hair,
And she set me down saftly on her knee;
Says, "Gin ye will be my leman sae true,
Sae mony braw things I will you gie."

She show'd me a mantle o' red scarlèt,
Wi' gowden flowers and fringes fine;
Says, "Gin ye will be my leman sae true,
This goodly gift it shall be thine."—

"Awa', awa', ye ugly witch!
Haud far awa', and let me be;
I never will be your leman sae true,
And I wish I were out o' your companie."

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

She neist brought a sark o' the saftest silk,
Weel wrought wi' pearls about the band ;
Says, "Gin ye will be my ain true-love,
This goodly gift ye shall command."

She show'd me a cup o' the good red gowd,
Weel set wi' jewels sae fair to see ;
Says, "Gin ye will be my ain true-love,
This goodly gift I will you gie."

"Awa', awa', ye ugly witch !
Haud far awa', and let me be ;
For I wadna ance kiss your ugly mouth,
For all the gifts that ye could gie."

She's turn'd her right and round about,
And thrice she blew on a grass-green horn ;
And she sware by the moon, and the stars aboon,
That she'd gar me rue the day I was born.

Then out has she ta'en a silver wand,
And she turn'd her three times round and
round ;
She mutter'd sic words, that my strength it fail'd,
And I fell down senseless on the ground.

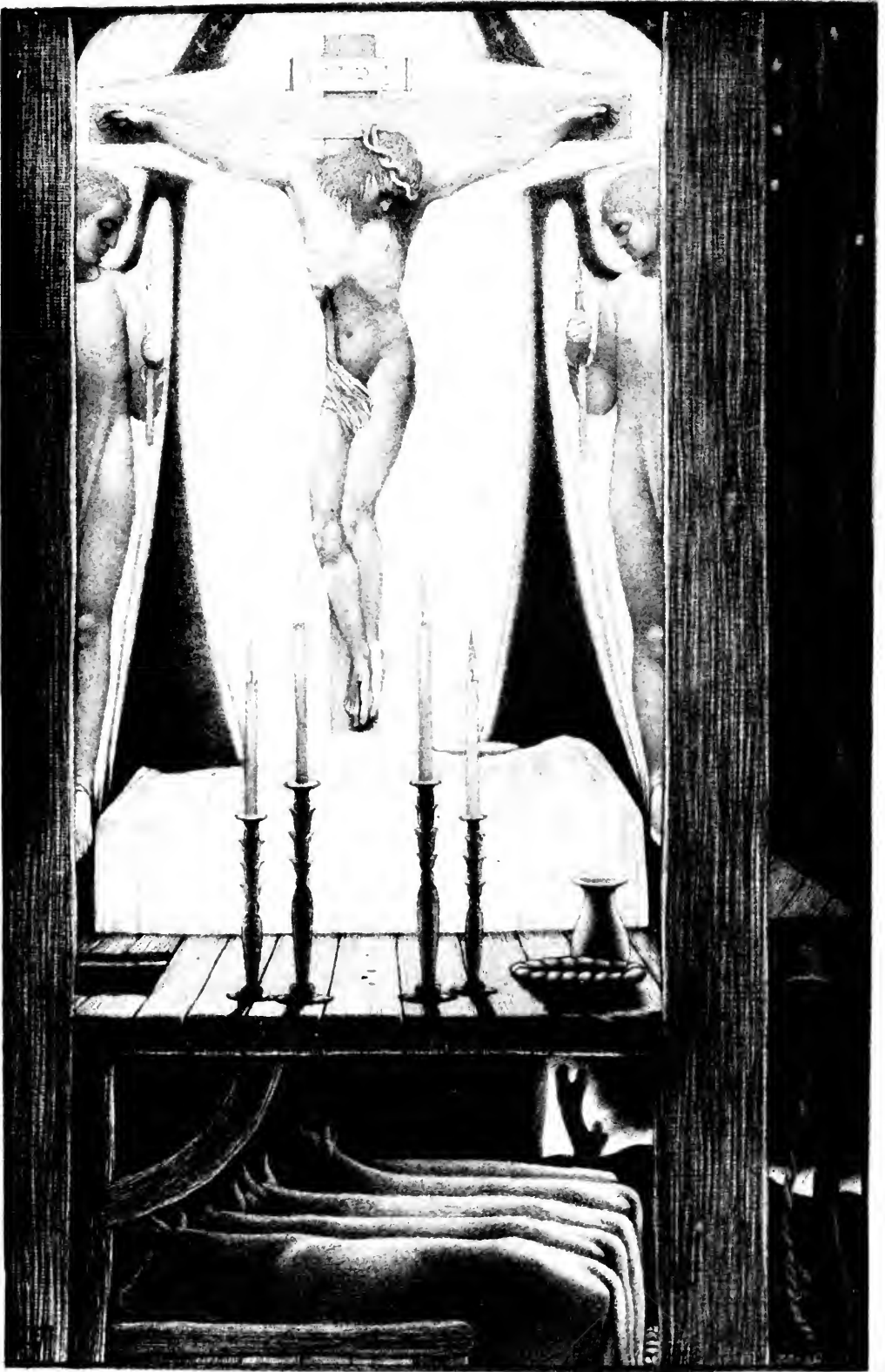
Alison Gross

She turn'd me into an ugly worm,
And gar'd me toddle about the tree ;
And aye, on ilka Saturday night,
Auld Alison Gross, she came to me,

With silver basin and silver kame,
To kemb my headie upon her knee ;
But, ere I'd kiss'd her ugly mouth,
I'd ha'e toddled for ever about the tree.

But it fell out last Hallowe'en,
When the seely court was ridin' by,
The queen lighted down on a gowany bank,
Nae far frae the tree where I wont to lie.

She took me up in her milk-white hand,
And she strok'd me three times o'er her knee ;
She changed me again to my ain proper shape,
And I nae mair toddle about the tree.



A LYKE-WAKE DIRGE

THIS ae nighte, this ae nighte,
 Every nighte and alle,
Fire and sleet, and candle-lighte,
 And Christe receive thy saule.

When thou from hence away art past,
 Every nighte and alle,
To Whinny-muir thou com'st at last,
 And Christe receive thy saule.

If ever thou gavest hosen and shoon,
 Every nighte and alle,
Sit thee down, and put them on,
 And Christe receive thy saule.

If hosen and shoon thou ne'er gav'st nane,
 Every nighte and alle,
The whinnes sall prick thee to the bare bane,
 And Christe receive thy saule.

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

From Whinny-muir when thou may'st pass,
 Every nighte and alle,
To Brig o' Dread thou com'st at last,
 And Christe receive thy saule.

From Brig o' Dread when thou may'st pass,
 Every nighte and alle,
To Purgatory fire thou com'st at last,
 And Christe receive thy saule.

If ever thou gavest meat or drink,
 Every nighte and alle,
The fire sall never make thee shrink,
 And Christe receive thy saule.

If meat or drink thou ne'er gav'st nane,
 Every nighte and alle,
The fire will burn thee to the bare bane,
 And Christe receive thy saule.

This ae nighte, this ae nighte,
 Every nighte and alle,
Fire and sleet, and candle-lighte,
 And Christe receive thy saule.





THE TWA CORBIES

As I was walking all alane,
I heard twa corbies making a mane ;
The tane unto the t'other say,
“Where sall we gang and dine to-day ?”—

“In behint yon auld fail-dyke,
I wot there lies a new-slain knight ;
And naebody kens that he lies there,
But his hawk, his hound, and lady fair.

“His hound is to the hunting gane,
His hawk to fetch the wild-fowl hame,
His lady's ta'en anither mate,
So we may mak' our dinner sweet.

“Ye'll sit on his white hause-bane,
And I'll pike out his bonny blue een ;
Wi' ae lock o' his gowden hair
We'll theek our nest when it grows bare.

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

“Mony a one for him makes mane,
But nane sall ken where he is gane;
O'er his white banes, when they are bare,
The wind sall blaw for evermair.”



KEMP OWYNE

HER mither died when she was young,
Which gave her cause to make great moan ;
Her father married the warst woman
That ever liv'd in Christendom.

She servèd her wi' foot and hand,
In everything that she could dee,
Till once, in an unlucky time,
She threw her o'er a craig by the sea.

Saying, " Lie you there, dove Isabel,
And all my sorrows lie with thee,
Till Kemp Owyne come to the craig,
And borrow you wi' kisses three."

Her breath grew strang, her hair grew lang,
And twisted round about a tree,
And all the people, far and near,
Thought that a savage beast was she.

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

This news did come to Kemp Owyne,
Where he did dwell, beyond the sea,
He hasted him to Estmere craig,
And on the savage beast look'd he.

"O out o' my stithe I winna rise,
And it is na for the fear o' thee,
Till Kemp Owyne, the kingis son,
Come to the craig and thrice kiss me."

Her breath was strang, her hair was lang,
And twisted thrice about the tree,
And with a swing she came about :
"Come to the craig, and kiss with me.

"Here is a royal belt," she cried,
"That I have found in the green sea ;
And while your body it is on,
Drawn shall your blood never be ;

"But if you touch me tail or fin,
I swear my belt your death shall be."
He steppit in, gave her a kiss,
The royal belt he brought him wi'.

Kemp Owyne

Her breath was strang, her hair was lang,
And twisted twice about the tree,
And with a swing she came about :
“Come to the craig, and kiss with me.

“Here is a royal ring,” she said,
“That I have found in the green sea ;
And while your finger it is on,
Drawn shall your blood never be ;

“But if you touch me, tail or fin,
I swear my ring your death shall be.”
He steppit in, gave her a kiss,
The royal ring he brought him wi’.

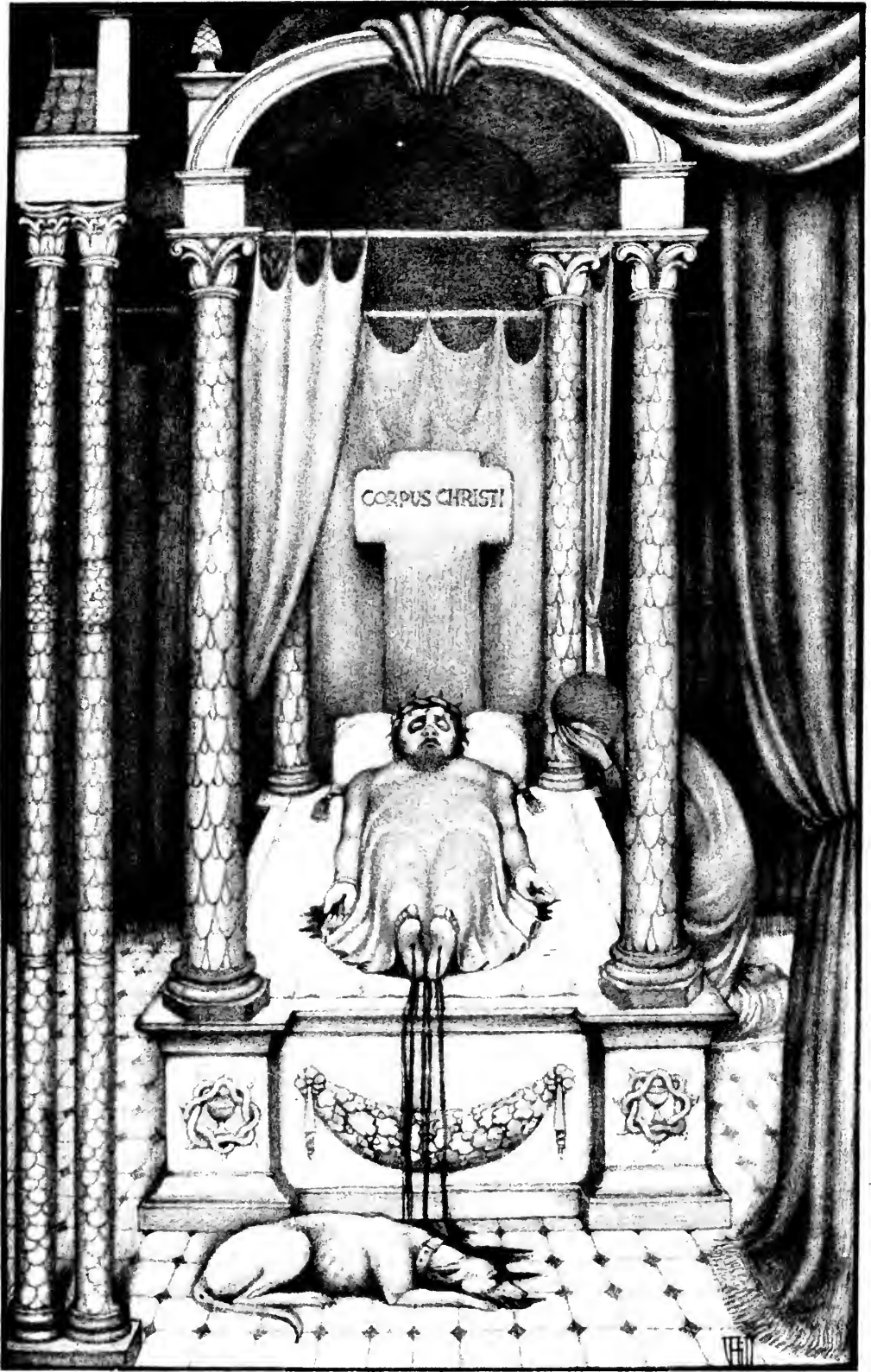
Her breath was strang, her hair was lang,
And twisted once about the tree ;
And with a swing she came about :
“Come to the craig, and kiss with me.

“Here is a royal brand,” she said,
“That I have found in the green sea ;
And while your body it is on,
Drawn shall your blood never be ;

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

“But if you touch me, tail or fin,
I swear my brand your death shall be.”
He steppit in, gave her a kiss,
That royal brand he brought him wi’.

Her breath was sweet, her hair grew short,
And twisted nane about the tree,
And smilingly she came about,
As fair a woman as fair could be.



THE FALCON

LULLY, lulley ! lully, lulley !
The faucon hath borne my make away !

He bare him up, he bare him down,
He bare him into an orchard brown.

In that orchard there was an hall,
That was hangèd with purple and pall.

And in that hall there was a bed,
It was hangèd with gold sae red.

And in that bed there li'th a knight,
His woundès bleeding day and night.

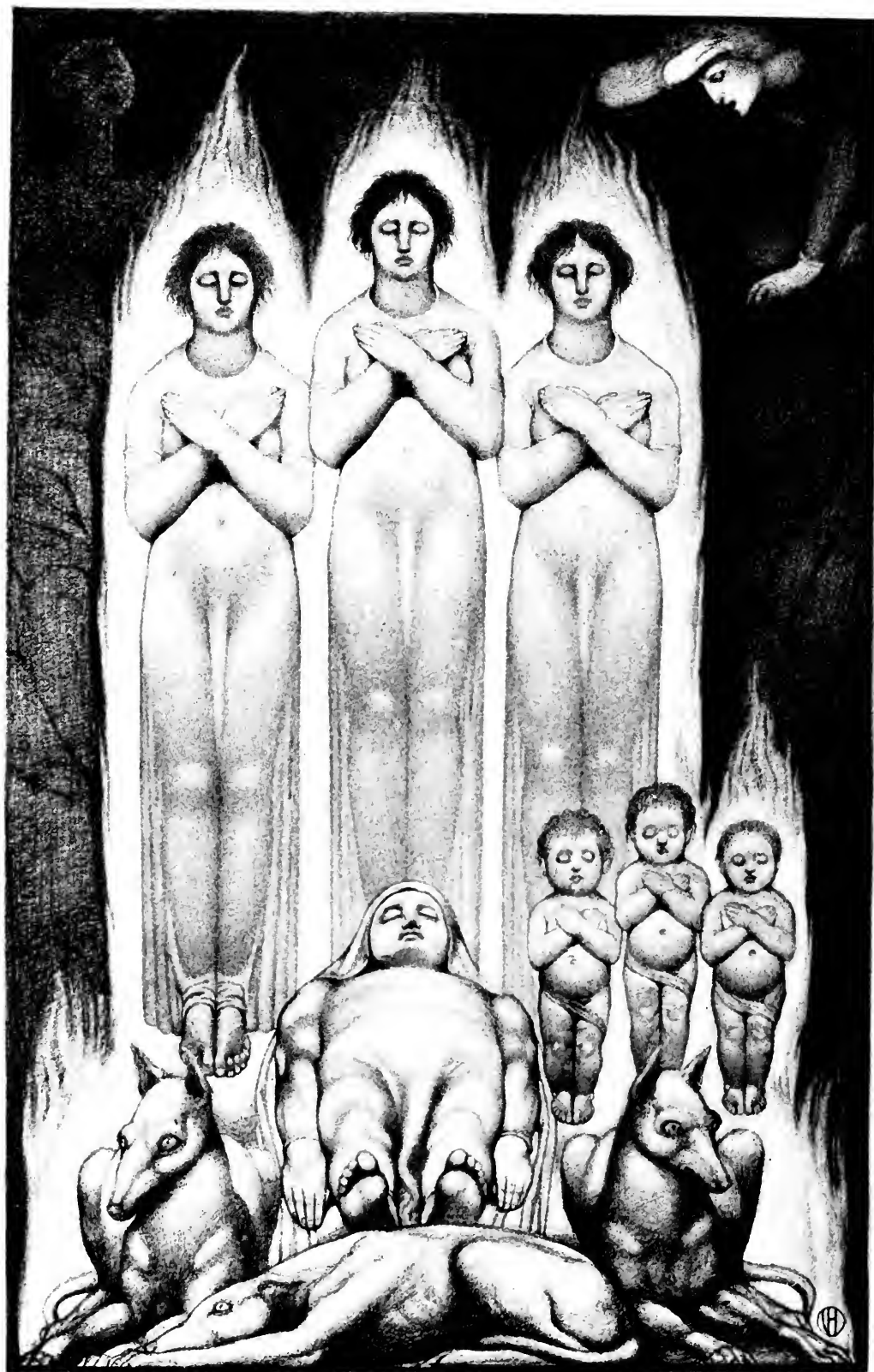
At that bed's foot there li'th a hound,
Licking the blood as it runs down.

By that bed-side kneeleth a may,
And she weepeth both night and day.

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

And at that bed's head standeth a stone,
Corpus Christi written thereon.

Lully, lulley ! lully, lulley !
The faucon hath borne my make away.



SWEET WILLIAM'S GHOST

LADY Marjorie, Lady Marjorie,
Sat sewing her silken seam ;
By her came a pale, pale ghost,
With many a sigh and moan.

"Are ye my father, the King ?" she says,
"Or are ye my brother John ?
Or are you my true-love, Sweet William,
From England newly come ?"—

"I'm not your father, the King," he says,
"No, no, nor your brother John ;
But I am your true-love, Sweet William,
From England newly come."—

"Have ye brought me any scarlets sae red ?
Or any silks sae fine ?
Or have ye brought me any precious things,
That merchants have for sale ?"—

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

"I have not brought you any scarlets sae red
No, no, nor the silks sae fine ;
But I have brought you my winding-sheet,
O'er many a rock and hill.

"O Lady Marjorie, Lady Marjorie,
For faith and charitie,
Will you give to me my faith and troth,
That I gave once to thee?"—

"O your faith and troth I'll not give thee,
No, no, that will not I,
Until I get ae kiss of your ruby lips,
And in my arms you lie."—

"My lips they are sae bitter," he says,
"My breath it is sae strang,
If you get ae kiss of my ruby lips,
Your days will not be lang.

"The cocks are crowing, Marjorie," he says,
"The cocks they are crowing again ;
It's time the dead should part frae the quick,
Marjorie, I must be gane."

Sweet William's Ghost

She follow'd him high, she follow'd him low,
Till she came to yon church-yard ;
O there the grave did open up,
And young William he lay down.

"What three things are these, Sweet William,"
she says,

"That stand here at your head?"—

"It is three maidens, Marjorie," he says,

"That I promis'd once to wed."—

"What three things are these, Sweet William,"
she says,

"That stand here at your side?"—

"It is three babes, Marjorie," he says,

"That these three maidens had."—

"What three things are these, Sweet William,"
she says,

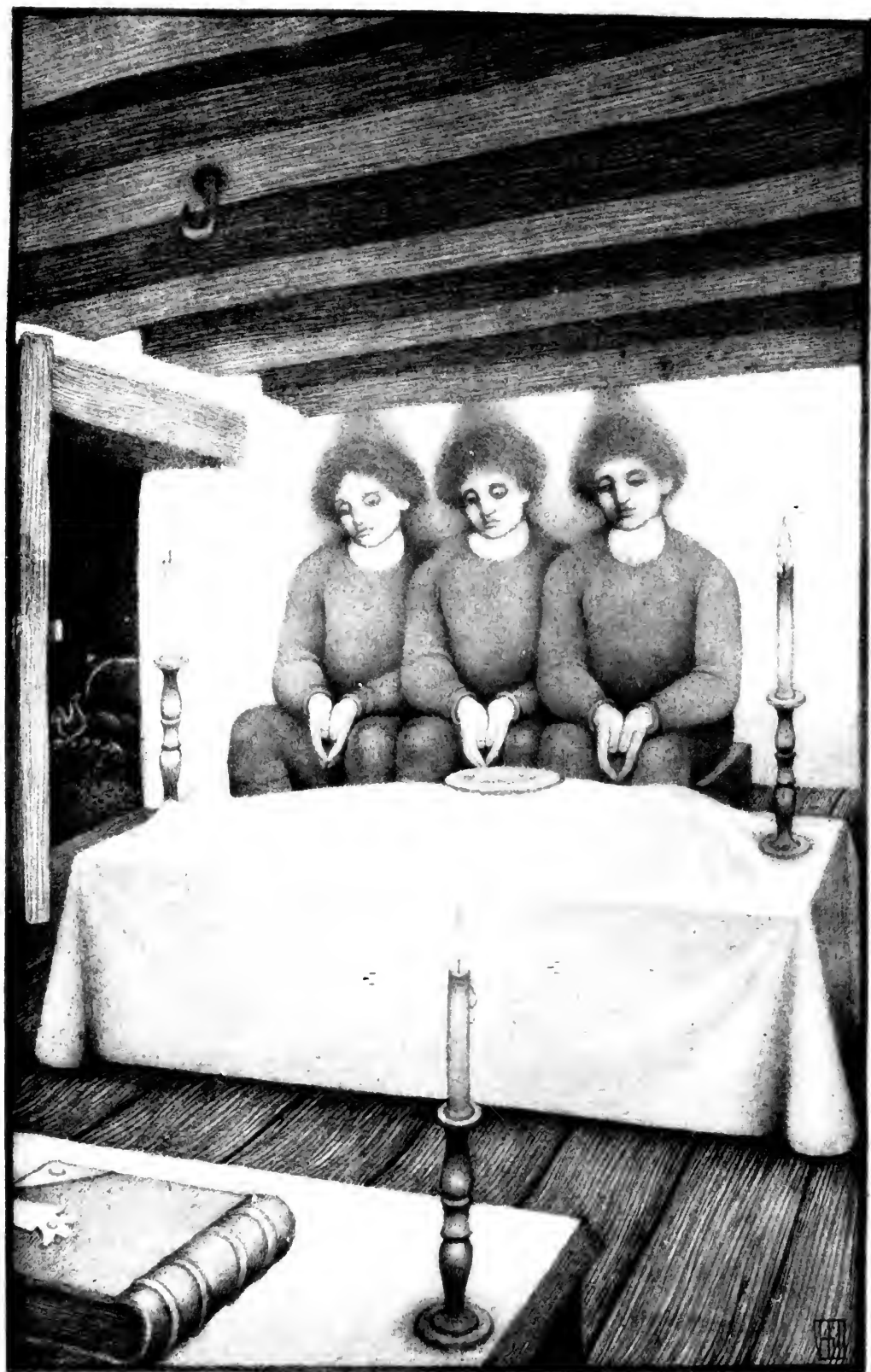
"That stand here at your feet?"—

"It is three hell-hounds, Marjorie," he says,

"That are waiting my soul to keep."

Ballads Weird ana Wonderful

She's ta'en up her white, white hand,
And she struck him in the breast,
Saying, "Have there again your faith and troth,
And I wish your soul good rest."



YOUNG BENJIE

OF a' the maids o' fair Scotland,
The fairest was Marjorie ;
And young Benjie was her ae true-love,
And a dear true-love was he.

And wow ! but they were lovers dear,
And lov'd full constantlie ;
But aye the mair when they fell out,
The sairer was their plea.

And they hae quarrell'd on a day,
Till Marjorie's heart grew wae ;
And she said she'd choose another love,
And let young Benjie gae.

And he was stout and proud-hearted,
And thought o't bitterlie ;
And he's gane by the wan moonlight
To meet his Marjorie.

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

“O, open, open, my true-love ;
O, open, and let me in !”—
“I darena open, young Benjie,
My three brothers are within.”—

“Ye lee, ye lee, ye bonny burd,
Sae loud’s I hear ye lee ;
As I came by the Lowden banks,
They bade gude e’en to me.

“But fare ye weel, my ae fause love,
That I hae lov’d sae lang ;
It sets ye choose another love,
And let young Benjie gang.”

Then Marjorie turn’d her round about,
The tear blinding her ee—
“I darena, darena let thee in,
But I’ll come down to thee.”

Then saft she smil’d, and said to him—
“O, what ill hae I done ? ”
He took her in his armès twa,
And threw her o’er the linn.

Young Benjie

The stream was strang, the maid was stout,
And laith, laith to be dang,
But, ere she wan the Lowden banks,
Her fair colour was wan.

Then up bespake her eldest brother—
“O, see na ye what I do see?”
And out then spake her second brother—
“It is our sister Marjorie.”

Out then spake her eldest brother—
“O, how shall we her ken?”
And out then spake her youngest brother—
“There’s a honey-mark on her chin.”

Then they’ve ta’en up the comely corpse,
And laid it on the ground,
“O, wha has kill’d our ae sister,
And how can he be found?”

“The night it is her low lyke-wake,
The morn her burial day,
And we maun watch at mirk midnight,
And hear what she will say.”

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

Wi' doors ajar, and candles light,
And torches burning clear,
The streekit corpse, till still midnight,
They wak'd, but naething hear.

About the middle o' the night
The cocks began to craw;
And at the dead hour o' the night
The corpse began to thraw.

"O, wha has done thee wrang, sister,
Or dar'd the deadly sin?
Wha was sae stout, and fear'd nae dout,
As throw ye o'er the linn?"—

"Young Benjie was the first ae man
I laid my love upon;
He was sae stout and proud-hearted,
He threw me o'er the linn."—

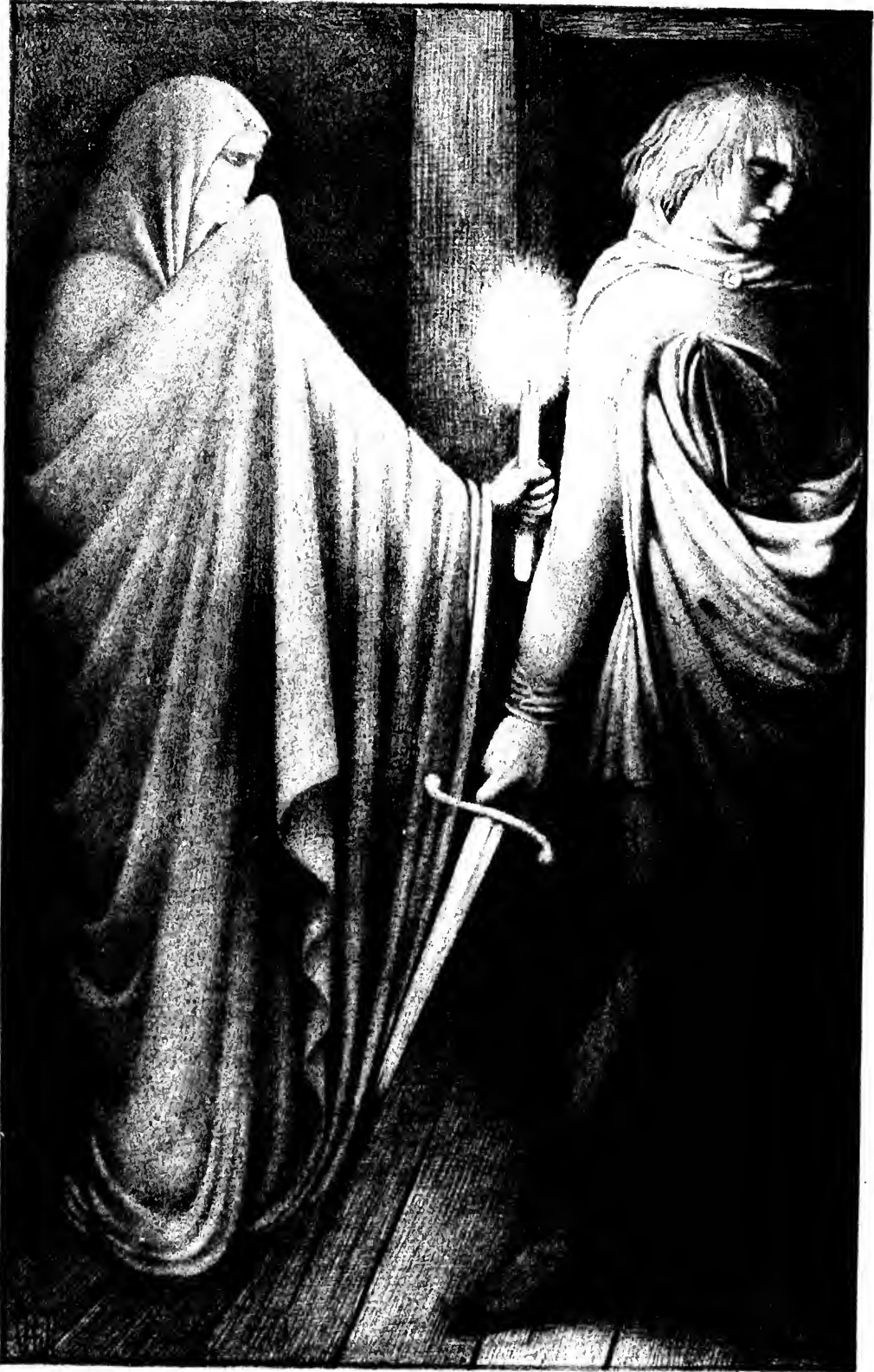
"Shall we young Benjie head, sister?
Shall we young Benjie hang?
Or shall we pike out his twa gray een,
And punish him ere he gang?"—

Young Benjie

“Ye mauna Benjie head, brothers,
Ye mauna Benjie hang,
But ye maun pike out his twa grey een,
And punish him ere he gang.

“Tie a green gravat round his neck,
And lead him out and in,
And the best ae servant about your house
To wait young Benjie on.

“And aye, at every seven years’ end,
Ye’ll take him to the linn ;
For that’s the penance he maun dree,
To scug his deadly sin.”



EDWARD, EDWARD

WHY does your brand sae drap wi' blude,
Edward, Edward?

Why does your brand sae drap wi' blude?

And why sae sad gang ye, O?"—

"O, I hae kill'd my hawk sae gude,
Mither, mither:

O, I hae kill'd my hawk sae gude,
And I hae nae mair but he, O."

"Your hawk's blude was never sae red,
Edward, Edward:

Your hawk's blude was never sae red,
My dear son, I tell thee, O."—

"O, I hae kill'd my red-roan steed,
Mither, mither:

O, I hae kill'd my red-roan steed,
That was sae fair and free, O."—

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

“Your steed was auld, and ye hae gat mair,

Edward, Edward :

Your steed was auld, and ye hae gat mair,

Some ither dule ye dree, O.”—

“O, I hae kill’d my father dear,

Mither, mither :

O, I hae kill’d my father dear,

Alas ! and wae is me, O.”—

“And whatten penance will ye dree for that,

Edward, Edward ?

And whatten penance will ye dree for that ?

My dear son, now tell me, O.”—

“I’ll set my feet in yonder boat,

Mither, mither :

I’ll set my feet in yonder boat,

And I’ll fare o’er the sea, O.”—

“And what will ye do wi’ your towers and ha’,

Edward, Edward ?

And what will ye do wi’ your towers and ha’,

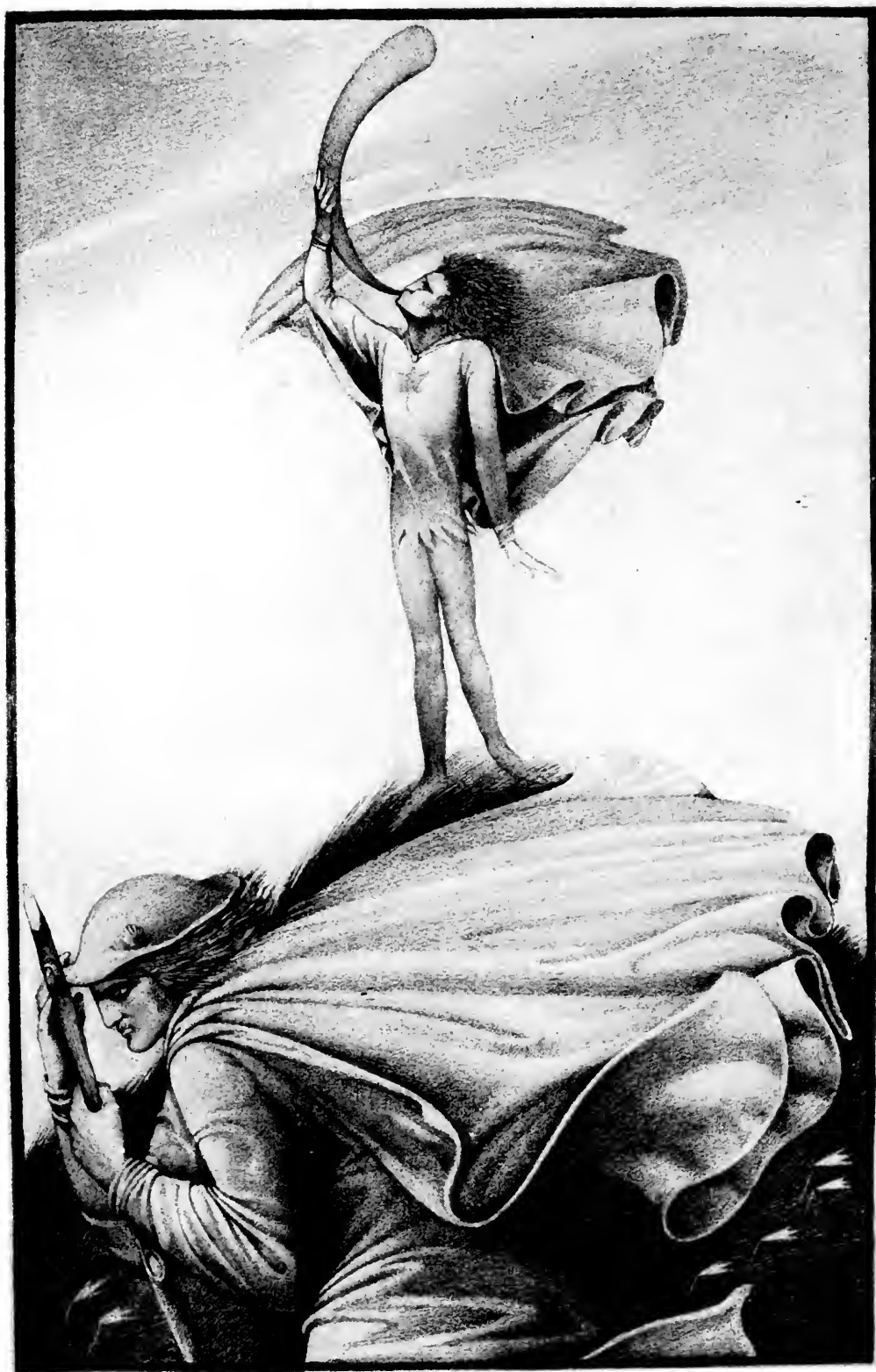
That were sae fair to see, O ? ”—

Edward, Edward

"I'll let them stand till they down fa',
Mither, mither :
I'll let them stand till they down fa',
For here never mair maun I be, O."—

"And what will ye leave to your bairns and wife,
Edward, Edward ?
And what will ye leave to your bairns and wife,
When ye gang o'er the sea, O ?"—
"The world's room ; let them beg through life,
Mither, mither :
The world's room ; let them beg through life,
For them never mair will I see, O."—

"And what will ye leave to your mither dear,
Edward, Edward ?
And what will ye leave to your mither dear ?
My dear son, now tell me, O."—
"The curse of hell frae me sall ye bear,
Mither, mither :
The curse of hell frae me sall ye bear,
Sic counsels ye gied to me, O."



THE ELFIN KNIGHT

THE Elfin Knight stands on yon hill,
 Blaw, blaw, blaw winds, blaw,
Blawing his horn baith loud and shrill,
 And the wind has blawn my plaid awa'.

“I wish that horn were in my kist,
And the laddie here that I love best.”

She had no sooner these words said,
When that the knight came to her bed.

“Thou art o'er young a maid,” quoth he,
“Married wi' me thou ill would'st be.”—

“I hae a sister younger than I,
And she was married yesterday.”—

“Married wi' me if thou would'st be,
A courtesy thou must do to me.

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

“Ye maun make me a fine holland sark,
Without any stitching or needle-wark.

“And ye maun wash it in yonder well,
Where dew never wat, nor rain ever fell.

“And ye maun dry it upon a thorn
That never budded sin’ Adam was born.”—

“Now, sin’ ye’ve ask’d some things o’ me,
It’s right I ask as many o’ thee.

“My father left me an acre o’ land,
Between the saut sea and the strand.

“And ye maun plow ’t wi’ your blawing horn,
And ye maun saw ’t wi’ pepper corn.

“And ye maun harrow ’t wi’ a single tine,
And ye maun shear ’t wi’ a sheep’s shank bane.

“And ye maun barn ’t in yon mouse-hole,
And ye maun thrash ’t in your shoe-sole.

The Elfin Knight

“And ye maun winnow ’t in your loof,
And ye maun sack it in your gluve.

“And ye maun dry ’t without candle or coal,
And grind it fine without quern or mill.

“When ye’ve done, and finish’d your wark,
Come back to me, and ye’ll get your sark !”







TRUE THOMAS

TRUE Thomas lay on Huntly bank,
A ferlie he spied wi' his ee,
For there he saw a lady bright,
Come riding down by the Eildon Tree.

Her skirt was o' the grass-green silk,
Her mantle o' the velvet fine,
At ilka tett of her horse's mane
Hung fifty siller bells and nine.

True Thomas, he pu'd aff his cap,
And louted low down to his knee :
“All hail, thou mighty Queen of Heaven !
For thy peer on earth I never did see.”—

“O no, O no, Thomas,” she said,
“That name does not belong to me ;
I am but the Queen of fair Elf-land,
That am hither come to visit thee.

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

"Harp and carp, Thomas," she said,
 "Harp and carp along wi' me ;
And if ye dare to kiss my lips,
 Sure of your body I will be."—

"Betide me weal, betide me woe,
 That weird shall never daunt me."
Syne he has kiss'd her rosy lips,
 All underneath the Eildon Tree.

"Now ye maun gae wi' me," she said,
 "True Thomas, ye maun gae wi' me ;
And ye maun serve me seven years,
 Thro' weal or woe as may chance to be."

She mounted on her milk-white steed ;
 She's ta'en True Thomas up behind ;
And aye, whene'er her bridle rang,
 The steed flew swifter than the wind.

O they rade on, and farther on,
 (The steed gaed swifter than the wind)
Until they reach'd a desert wide,
 And living land was left behind.

True Thomas

“Light down, light down, now, True Thomas,
And lean your head upon my knee;
Abide, and rest a little space,
And I will show you ferlies three.

“O see ye not yon narrow road,
So thick beset with thorn and brier?
That is the path of righteousness,
Though after it but few enquire.

“And see ye not that braid, braid road,
That lies across the lilly leven?
That is the path of wickedness,
Though some call it the road to heaven.

“And see ye not that bonny road,
That winds about the ferny brae?
That is the road to fair Elf-land,
Where thou and I this night maun gae.

“But, Thomas, ye maun haud your tongue,
Whatever ye may hear or see;
For, if ye speak word in Elfin-land
Ye’ll ne’er get back to your ain countrie.”

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

And they rade on, and farther on,
And they waded through rivers aboon the
knee,
And they saw neither sun nor moon,
But they heard the roaring of the sea.

It was mirk, mirk night, there was nae star-light,
And they waded through red blude to the
knee ;
For a' the blude that's shed on earth,
Rins through the springs o' that countrie.

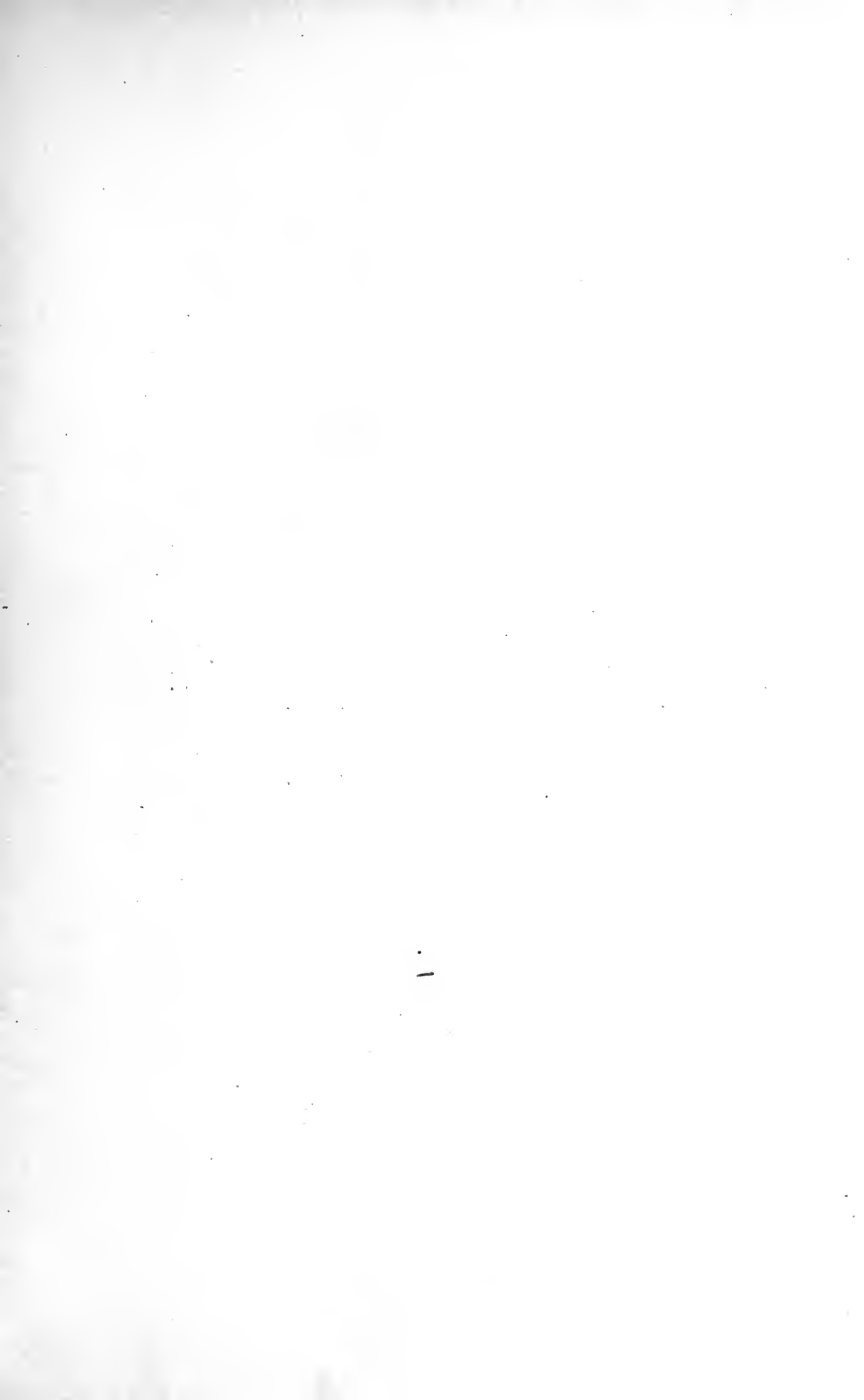
Syne they came to a garden green,
And she pu'd an apple frae a tree :
"Take this for thy wages, True Thomas ;
It will give thee the tongue that can never
lee."—

"My tongue is mine ain," True Thomas said,
"A goodly gift ye wad gie to me !
I neither dought to buy nor sell,
At fair or tryst where I may be.

True Thomas

“I dought neither speak to prince or peer,
Nor ask of grace from fair ladie.”—
“Now haud thy peace!” the lady said,
“For as I say, so must it be.”

He has gotten a coat of the even cloth,
And a pair o’ shoon of the velvet green;
And till seven years were gane and past,
True Thomas on earth was never seen.





THE CRUEL MOTHER

SHE has ta'en her mantle her about,
All alone and alonie O;
She has gane aff to the gude greenwood,
Down by yon greenwood sidie O.

She has set her back unto an aik,
First it bowed, and syne it brake.

She has set her back unto a brier,
Bonny were the twa babes she did bear.

She has ta'en out her little pen-knife,
And she's parted them and their sweet life.

She has howkit a hole, baith deep and wide,
She has put them in baith side by side.

She has gane back to her father's ha',
She seem'd the lealest maid o' them a'.

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

As she lookit o'er the castle wa',
She saw twa naked boys playing at the ba'.

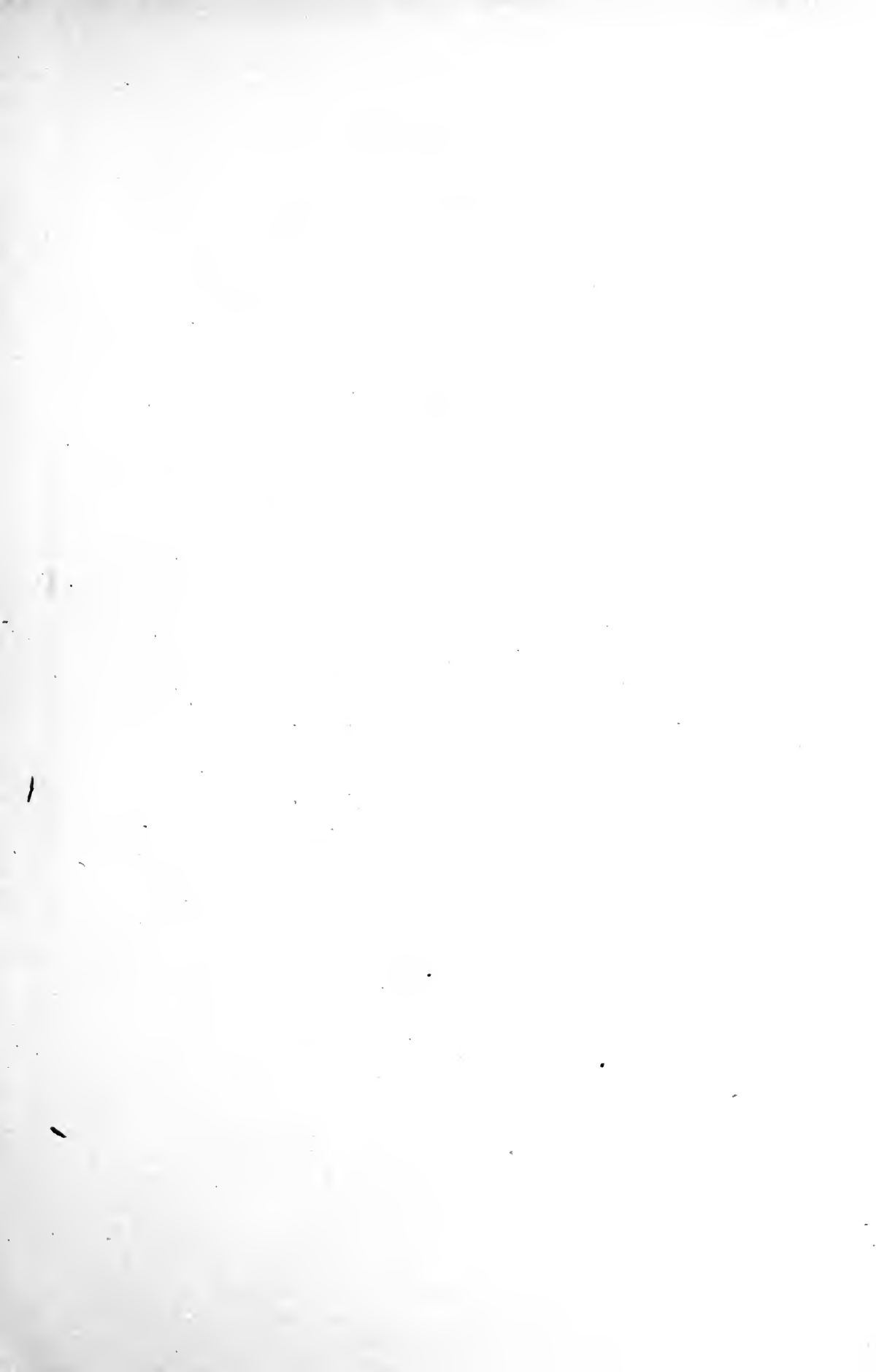
"O, bonny boys, gin ye were mine,
I would cleed ye in the satin fine.

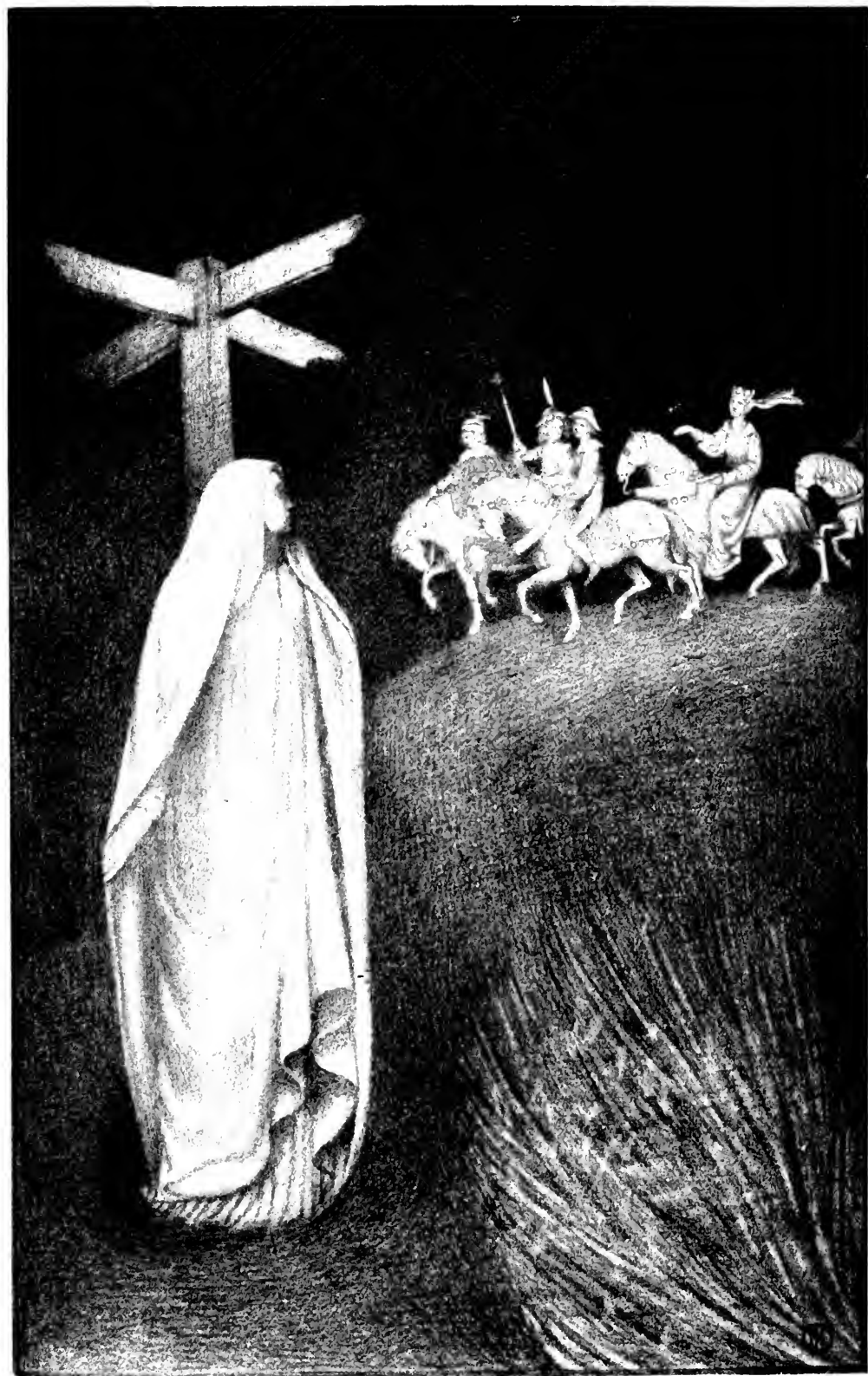
"O, and I would cleed ye in the silk,
And wash you aye in morning milk."—

"O, cruel mither, when we were thine,
Ye did na prove to us sae kind,

"But out ye took your little pen-knife,
And parted us, and our sweet life.—

"And now we're in the heavens sae hie,
All alone and alonie O;
And ye hae the pains o' hell to dree,
Down by yon greenwood sidie O.





TAMLANE

“O I forbid ye, maidens a’,
That wear gowd on your hair,
To come or gae by Carterhaugh,
For young Tamlane is there.”

But up then spake her, fair Janet,
The fairest o’ a’ her kin:
“I’ll come and gang to Carterhaugh,
And ask nae leave o’ him.”

She has kilted her green kirtle
A little aboon her knee;
And she has braided her yellow hair
A little aboon her bree.

She’s prink’d hersell, and preen’d hersell,
By the ae light o’ the moon,
And she’s awa’ to Carterhaugh,
To speak wi’ young Tamlane.

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

And when she came to Carterhaugh,
She gaed beside the well,
And there she fand his steed standing,
But he wasna there himsell.

She hadna pu'd a red, red rose,
A rose but barely three,
When up and starts a wee, wee man,
At Lady Janet's knee.

Says—"Why pu' ye the rose, Janet?
What gars ye break the tree?
Or why come ye to Carterhaugh
Without the leave o' me?"—

"This Carterhaugh it is mine ain,
My daddy gave it me;
I'll come and gang to Carterhaugh,
And ask nae leave o' thee."

He's ta'en her by the milk-white hand,
Amang the leaves sae green;
And sair and mickle was the love
That fell the twa between.

Tamlane

He's ta'en her by the milk-white hand
 Amang the roses red ;
And they hae vow'd a solemn vow
 Ilk ither for to wed.

"The truth ye'll tell to me, Tamlane,
 A word ye maunna lee :
Gin e'er ye was in holy chapel,
 Or sain'd in Christentie ?"—

"The truth I'll tell to thee, Janet,
 A word I winna lee :
A knight me got, and a lady me bore,
 As well as they did thee.

"Randolph, Earl Murray, was my sire,
 Dunbar, Earl March, is thine ;
We lov'd when we were children small,
 Which yet you well may mind.

"When I was a boy just turn'd of nine,
 My uncle sent for me,
To hunt, and hawk, and ride wi' him,
 And keep him companie.

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

“There came a wind out of the north,
A sharp wind and a snell;
And a dead sleep came over me,
And frae my horse I fell.

“The Queen of Fairies keppit me
In yon green hill to dwell;
And I’m a fairy, lithe and limber—
Fair lady, view me well.

“And I would never tire, Janet,
In Elfin-land to dwell;
But aye, at every seven years,
They pay the teind to hell;
And I’m sae fat and fair o’ flesh,
I fear ’twill be mysell.

“This night is Hallowe’en, Janet,
The morn is Hallowday;
And, gin ye dare your true-love win,
Ye hae nae time to stay.

“The night it is gude Hallowe’en,
When fairy folk do ride,

Tamlane

And she that wad her true-love win,
At Miles Cross she maun bide.”—

“But how shall I thee ken, Tamlane?
Or how shall I thee know,
Amang sae many unearthly knights,
The like I never saw?”—

“The first company that passes by,
Say na, and let them gae;
The neist company that passes by,
Say na, and do right sae;
The third company that passes by,
Then I’ll be ane o’ thae.

“First let pass the black, Janet,
And syne let pass the brown;
But grip ye to the milk-white steed,
And pu’ the rider down.

“For I ride on the milk-white steed,
Wi’ a gowd star in my crown;
Because I was a christen’d knight,
They gie me that renown.

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

“My right hand will be gloved, Janet,
My left hand will be bare ;
And thae’s the tokens I gie thee—
Nae doubt I will be there.

“They’ll turn me in your arms, Janet,
An ask and then an adder ;
But haud me fast, let me not pass,
I’ll be your bairnie’s father.

“They’ll shape me in your arms, Janet,
A toad and then an eel ;
But haud me fast, nor let me gang,
As you do love me weel.

“And next they’ll shape me in your arms
A dove, and then a swan ;
And last they’ll shape me in your arms
A mother-naked man :
Cast your green mantle over me,
I’ll be mysell again.”

Gloomy, gloomy was the night,
And eerie was the way,

Tamlane

As fair Janet, in her green mantle,
To Miles Cross she did gae.

About the dead hour o' the night,
She heard the bridles ring ;
And Janet was as glad o' that
As any earthly thing.

And first gaed by the black, black steed,
And then gaed by the brown ;
But fast she gript the milk-white steed,
And pu'd the rider down.

She pu'd him frae the milk-white steed,
And loot the bridle fa' ;
And up there rase an elritch cry :
"He's won amang us a' !"

They shaped him in fair Janet's arms,
An ask, and then an adder ;
She held him fast in every shape
To be her bairnie's father.

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

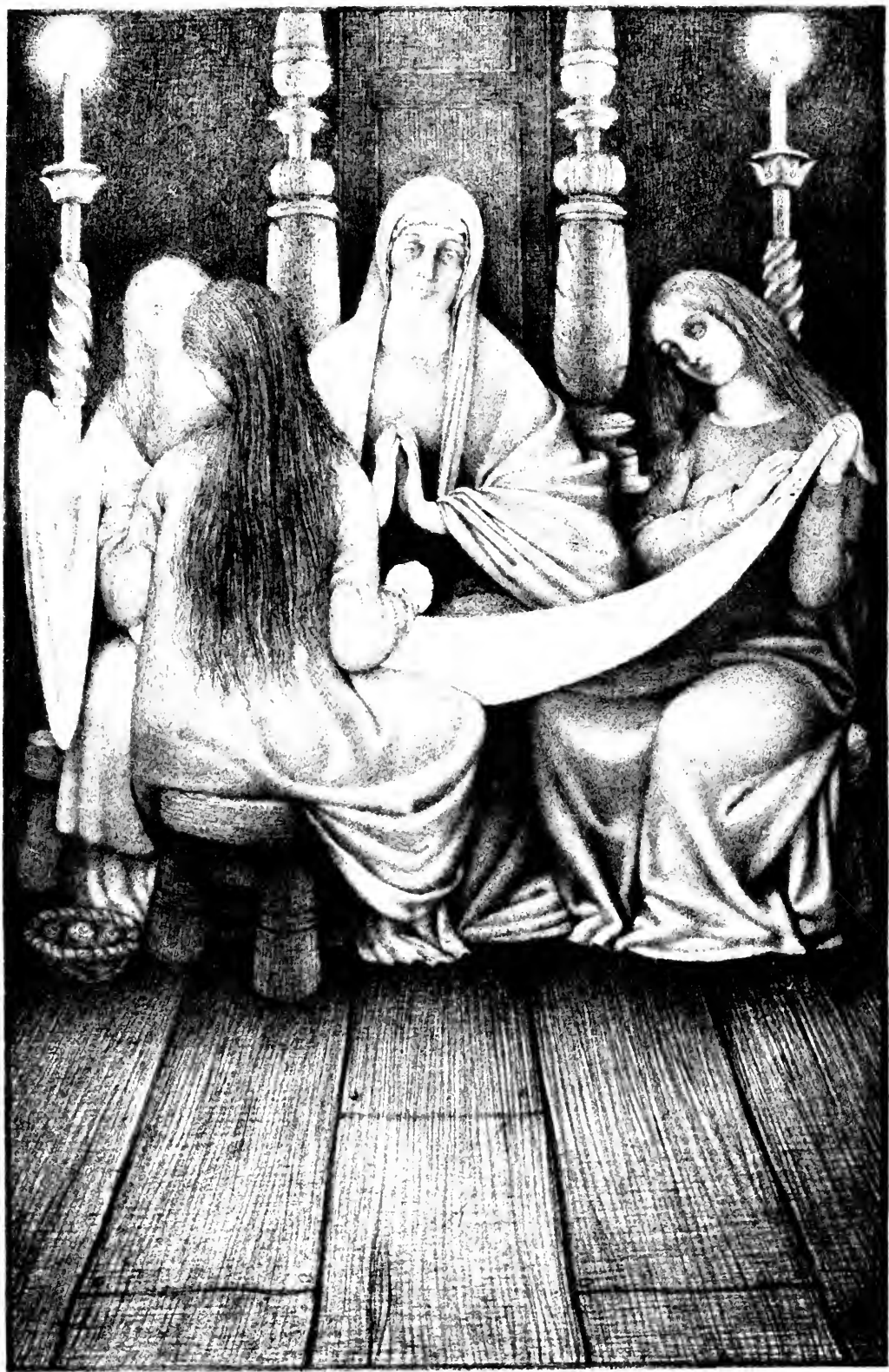
They shaped him in her arms at last
A mother-naked man ;
She cast her mantle over him,
And sae her true-love wan.

Up then spak' the Queen o' Fairies,
Out o' a bush o' broom :
"She that has borrow'd young Tamlane
Has gotten a stately groom.

"But had I kenn'd, Tamlane," she says,
"A lady wad borrow thee,
I wad hae ta'en out thy twa grey een,
And put in twa een o' tree.

"Had I but kenn'd, Tamlane," she says,
"Before ye cam' frae hame,
I wad hae ta'en out your heart o' flesh,
And put in a heart o' stane.

"And had I but had the wit yestreen
That I hae coft this day,
I'd paid my teind seven times to hell
Ere you had been won away !"



LORD THOMAS AND FAIR ANNET

LORD Thomas and fair Annet
Sat all day on a hill ;
When night was come, and sun was set,
They had not talk'd their fill.

Lord Thomas said a word in jest,
Fair Annet took it ill :
“ I winna wed a tocherless lass
Against my ain friends' will.”—

“ If ye will never wed a wife,
A wife will ne'er wed ye.”—
Sae he is hame to tell his mither,
And knelt upon his knee.

“ O rede, O rede, mither,” he says,
“ A gude rede gie to me ;
O, shall I take the nut-brown bride,
And let fair Annet be ? ”—

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

“The nut-brown bride has gowd and gear,
Fair Annet she’s gat nane ;
And the little beauty fair Annet has,
O, it will soon be gane.”

And he has to his brother gane :
“Now, brother, rede ye me ;
O, shall I marry the nut-brown bride,
And let fair Annet be ?”—

“The nut-brown bride has owsen, brother,
The nut-brown bride has kye ;
I wad hae ye marry the nut-brown bride,
And cast fair Annet by.”—

“Her owsen may die i’ the house, billy,
And her kye into the byre ;
And I shall hae nothing to mysell,
But a fat fadge by the fire.”

And he has to his sister gane :
“Now, sister, rede ye me ;
O, shall I marry the nut-brown bride,
And set fair Annet free ?”—

Lord Thomas and Fair Annet

“I’se rede ye take fair Annet, Thomas,
And let the brown bride alane ;
Lest ye should sigh and say, ‘Alas !
What is this I hae brought hame?’”—

“No, I will take my mither’s counsel,
And marry me out o’ hand ;
And I will take the nut-brown bride—
Fair Annet may leave the land.”

Up then rose fair Annet’s father,
Twa hours or it were day,
And he is gane into the bower,
Wherein fair Annet lay.

“Rise up, rise up, fair Annet,” he says,
“Put on your silken sheen ;
Let us gae to St. Mary’s kirk,
And see that gay weddin’.”—

“My maids, gae to my dressing-room,
And dress to me my hair ;
Where’er ye laid a plait before,
See ye lay ten times mair.

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

“My maids, gae to my dressing-room,
And dress to me my sark;
The ae half is o’ the holland fine,
The ither o’ needle-wark.”

The horse fair Annet rode upon,
He amblit like the wind;
Wi’ siller he was shod before,
Wi’ burning gowd behind.

Four-and-twenty siller bells
Were a’ tied to his mane;
Wi’ ae tift o’ the norland wind
They tinkled ane by ane.

Four-and-twenty gay gude knights
Rode by fair Annet’s side,
And four-and-twenty fair ladies,
As if she had been a bride.

And when she came to Mary’s kirk,
She sat on Mary’s stean:
The cleeding that fair Annet had on,
It skinkled in their een.

Lord Thomas and Fair Annet

And when she came into the kirk,
She shimmer'd like the sun ;
The belt that was about her waist,
Was a' wi' pearls bedone.

She sat her by the nut-brown bride,
And her een they were sae clear,
Lord Thomas he clean forgat the bride,
When fair Annet she drew near.

He had a rose into his hand,
And he gave it kisses three,
And reaching by the nut-brown bride,
Laid it on fair Annet's knee.

Up then spake the nut-brown bride,
And she spake wi' mickle spite :
“And where gat ye that rose-water,
That does make ye sae white ?”—

“O, I did get the rose-water
Where ye will ne'er get nane,
For I did get that very rose-water
Into my mither's wame.

Ballads Weird and Wonaerful

“Tak’ back and wear your rose, Thomas,
As lang as it will last ;
For, like your love, its sweetness a’
Will soon be gane and past.”

When night was come, and day was gane,
And a’ were boun’ to bed,
Lord Thomas and the nut-brown bride
In chamber they were laid.

They were na weel lain down,
And scarcely fa’n asleep,
When up and stands she, fair Annet,
Just at Lord Thomas’ feet.

“Weel brook ye o’ your nut-brown bride,
Between ye and the wa’ ;
And sae will I o’ my winding-sheet,
That suits me best ava.

“Weel brook ye o’ your nut brown-bride,
Between ye and the stock ;
And sae will I o’ my black, black kist,
That has neither key nor lock !

Lord Thomas and Fair Annet

“Weel brook ye o’ your nut-brown bride,
And o’ your bridal bed ;
And sae will I o’ the cauld, cauld mools,
That soon will hap my head.”

Lord Thomas rase, put on his claes,
Drew to him his hose and shoon ;
And he is on to Annet’s bower,
By the lee light o’ the moon.

The firsten bower that he came to,
There was right dowie wark ;
Her mither and her three sisters
Were makin’ to Annet a sark.

The neisten bower that he came to,
There was right dowie cheer ;
Her father and her seven brethren
Were makin’ to Annet a bier.

The lasten bower that he came to,
O, heavy was his care,
The dead candles were burning bright,
And fair Annet streekit there.

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

“It’s I will kiss your bonny cheek,
And I will kiss your chin ;
And I will kiss your clay-cauld lip,
But I’ll ne’er kiss woman again.

“This day ye birl at Annet’s wake,
The white bread and the wine ;
Before the morn at twal o’clock,
They’ll birl the same at mine.”

The tane was buried in Mary’s kirk,
The tither in Mary’s quire,
And out o’ the tane there grew a birk,
And out o’ the tither a brier.

And aye they grew, and aye they drew,
As they would fain be near,
And by this ye may ken right weel,
They were twa lovers dear.



THE CROODLIN' DOO

"O WHERE hae ye been a' the day,
My little wee croodlin' doo?"—

"O I've been at my grandmother's;
Mak' my bed, mammy, noo."

"O what gat ye at your grandmother's,
My little wee croodlin' doo?"—

"I got a bonny wee fishie;
Mak' my bed, mammy, noo."

"O where did she catch the fishie,
My little wee croodlin' doo?"—

"She catch'd it in the gutter-hole;
Mak' my bed, mammy, noo."

"And what did she do wi' the fishie,
My little wee croodlin' doo?"—

"She boil'd it in a brass pan;
Mak' my bed, mammy, noo."

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

“And what did ye do wi’ the banes o’t,
My little wee croodlin’ doo?”—

“I gied them to my little dog ;
Mak’ my bed, mammy, noo.”

“And what did your little doggie do,
My little wee croodlin’ doo?”—

“He stretched out his head and feet, and dee’d ;
Mak’ my bed, mammy, noo.”



THE WATER O' WEARIE'S WELL

THERE came a bird out of a bush,
On water for to dine ;
And, sighing sair, says the king's daughter,
"O wae's this heart o' mine."

He's ta'en a harp into his hand,
He's harpit them a' asleep ;
Except it was the king's daughter,
Wha ae wink couldna get.

He's loupin' on his berry-brown steed,
Ta'en her on behind himsell ;
Then baith rade down to that water
That they call Wearie's Well.

"Wade in, wade in, my lady fair,
Nae harm shall thee befall ;
Aft times hae I water'd my steed
Wi' the water o' Wearie's Well."

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

The first step that she steppit in,
She steppit to the knee ;
And, sighing says this lady fair,
“This water’s nae for me.”—

“Wade in, wade in, my lady fair,
Nae harm shall thee befall ;
Aft times hae I water’d my steed
Wi’ the water o’ Wearie’s Well.”

The neist step that she steppit in,
She steppit to the middle ;
“O,” sighing says this lady fair,
“I’ve wat my gowden girdle.”—

“Wade in, wade in, my lady fair,
Nae harm shall thee befall ;
Aft times hae I water’d my steed
Wi’ the water o’ Wearie’s Well.”

The neist step that she steppit in,
She steppit to the chin ;
“O,” sighing says this lady fair,
“That this should gar twa true-loves twin !”—

The Water o' Wearie's Well

“Seven kings’ daughters I’ve drownèd there,
I’ the water o’ Wearie’s Well ;
And I’ll make ye the eight o’ them,
And ring the common bell.”—

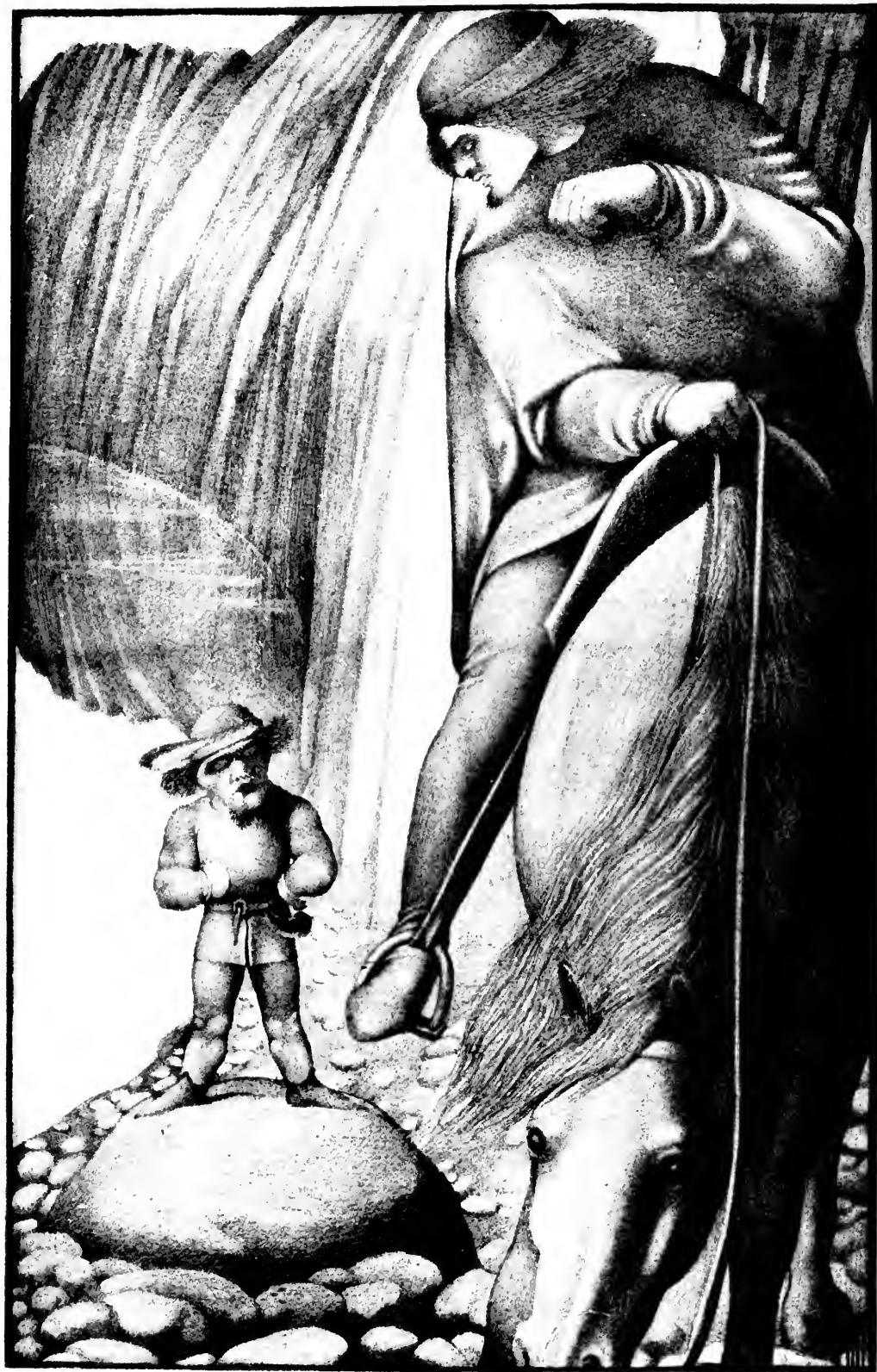
“Since I am standing here,” she says,
“This dowie death to dee :
One kiss o’ your comely mouth,
I’m sure wad comfort me.”

He loutit him o’er his saddle bow,
To kiss her cheek an’ chin ;
She’s ta’en him in her armès twa,
And thrown him headlong in.

“Sin’ seven kings’ daughters ye’ve drownèd there,
I’ the water o’ Wearie’s Well,
I’ll mak’ ye the bridegroom to them a,
And ring the bell mysell.”

And aye she warsled, and aye she swam,
And she swam to dry land ;
And thankit God most cheerfullie,
For the dangers she overcam.





THE WEE, WEE MAN

As I was walking all alane
Between a water and a wa',
There I spied a wee, wee man,
And he was the least that e'er I saw.

His legs were scant a shathmont lang,
And thick and thimber was his thie,
Between his brows there was a span,
And between his shoulders there was three.

He has ta'en up a mickle stane,
And he flung 't as far as I could see ;
Though I had been a Wallace wight
I couldna liften 't to my knee.

"O wee, wee man, but ye be strang !
O tell me where your dwelling be ?"—
"My dwelling's down by yon bonny bower ;
O will ye gae wi' me and see ?"

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

On we lap, and awa' we rade,
Till we came to a bonny green ;
We lighted down to bait our steed,
And out there came a lady sheen ;

Wi' four-and-twenty at her back
A' comely clad in glisterin' green ;
Tho' the King of Scotland had been there,
The warst o' them might hae been his queen.

On we lap, and awa' we rade,
Till we came to a bonny ha' ;
The roof was o' the beaten gowd,
And the floor was o' the crystal a'.

When we came to the stair-foot,
Ladies were dancing jimp and sma' ;
But in the twinkling of an ee,
My wee, wee man was clean awa'.



HUGH OF LINCOLN

A' THE boys o' merry Lincoln
Were playing at the ba' ;
And wi' them was the sweet Sir Hugh,
And he play'd o'er them a'.

He kick'd the ba' then wi' his foot,
And keppit it wi' his knee,
Till even in at the Jew's window,
He gar'd the bonny ba' flee.

Then out and cam the Jew's daughter :
"Will ye come in and dine?"—
"I winna come in, and I canna come in,
Without my play-feres nine.

"Cast out the ba' to me, fair maid,
Cast out the ba' to me!"—
"Ye ne'er shall hae 't, my bonny Sir Hugh,
Till ye come up to me."

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

She's gane unto her father's garden
As fast as she could rin,
And pu'd an apple, red and green,
To wile the young thing in.

She wil'd him into ae chamber,
She wil'd him into twa ;
She wil'd him into the third chamber,
And that was the warst ava.

And she has ta'en out a little pen-knife,
Hung low down by her gair ;
She has twin'd the young thing o' his life,
A word he ne'er spak' mair.

And out and cam the thick, thick blude,
And out and cam the thin,
And out and cam the bonny heart's blude,
There was nae life left in.

She laid him on a dressing-board,
And dress'd him like a swine,
And laughing says : " Gae now and play
Wi' your sweet play-feres nine ! "

Hugh of Lincoln

She row'd him in a cake o' lead ;
 Bade him—"Lie still there and sleep !"
She cast him in a deep draw-well,
 Was fifty fathom deep.

When bells were rung, and mass was sung,
 And a' the bairns cam hame,
When ilka lady had hame her son,
 The Lady Helen had nane.

She row'd her mantle her about,
 And sair, sair 'gan she weep,
And she ran into the Jew's castle,
 When they were a' asleep.

"My bonny Sir Hugh, my pretty Sir Hugh !
 I pray thee to me speak."—
"O lady, gae to the deep draw-well,
 Gin ye your son would seek."

Lady Helen ran to the deep draw-well,
 And knelt upon her knee :
"My bonny Sir Hugh, an ye be here,
 I pray thee speak to me !"—

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

“The lead it is wondrous heavy, mother,
The well is wondrous deep ;
A keen pen-knife sticks in my heart,
A word I downa speak.

“But lift me out o’ this deep draw-well,
Put a bible at my feet,
And bury me in yon churchyard,
And I’ll lie still and sleep.

“Gae hame, gae hame, my mither dear,
Fetch me my winding-sheet ;
And at the back o’ merry Lincoln,
It’s there we twa shall meet.”

Now Lady Helen she’s gane hame,
Made him a winding-sheet ;
And at the back o’ merry Lincoln
The dead corpse she did meet.

And a’ the bells o’ merry Lincoln
Without men’s hands were rung ;
And ne’er was such a burial
Sin’ Adam’s days begun.



THE MERMAID

To yon fause stream, that, near the sea,
Hides many a shelf and plum,
And rives wi' fearful din the stanes,
A witless knight did come.

The day shines clear—far in he's gane
Where shells are silver bright,
Fishes were loupin' a aroun',
And sparklin' to the light.

Whan, as he laved, sounds cam sae sweet
Frae ilka rock an' tree ;
The brief was out, 'twas him it doom'd
The mermaid's face to see.

Frae 'neath a rock, soon, soon she rase,
And stately on she swam,
Stopp'd i' the midst, and becked and sang
To him to stretch his han'.

Ballaas Weird and Wonderful

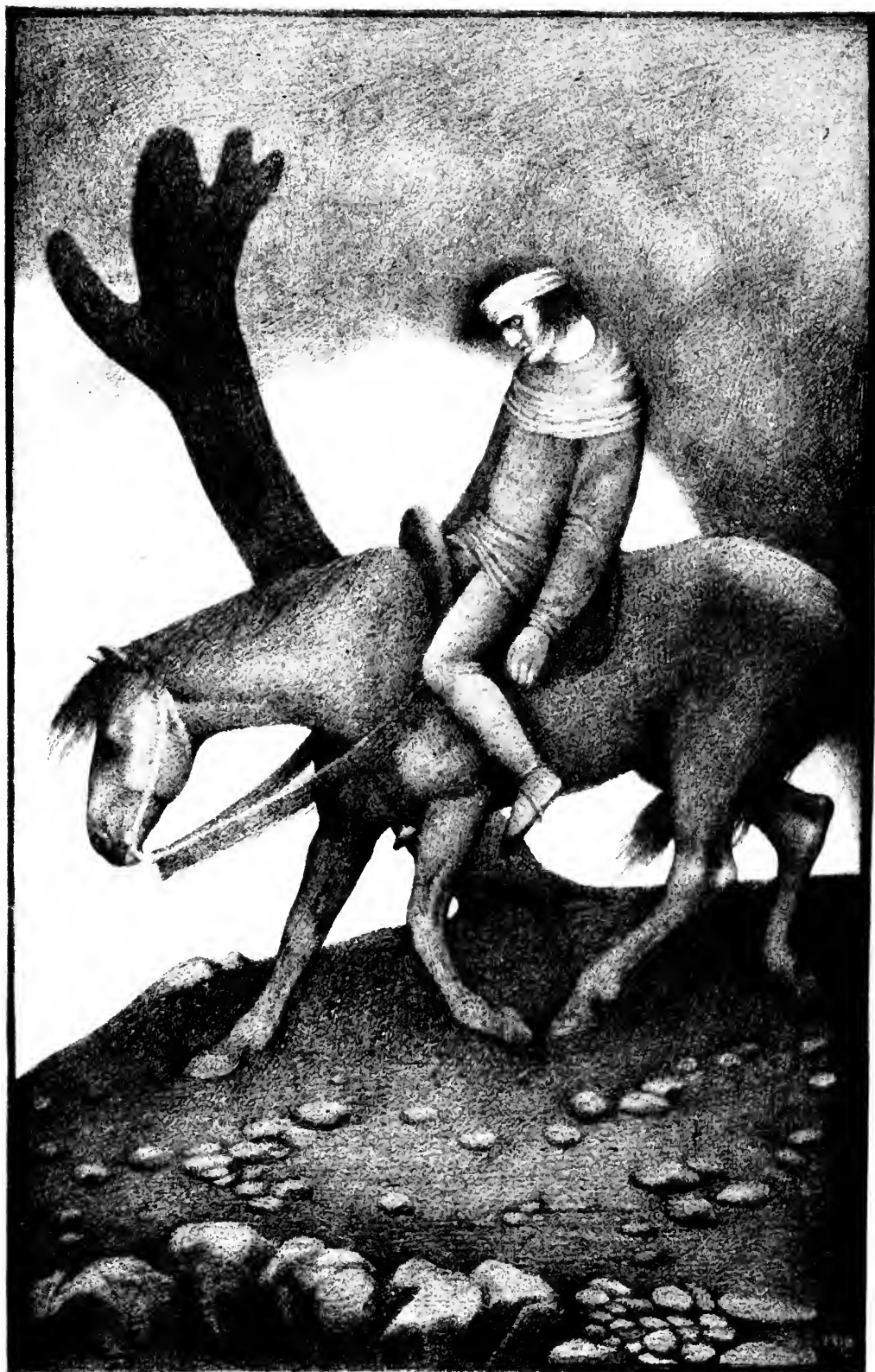
Gowden glist the yellow links
That round her neck she'd twine ;
Her een war o' the skyie blue,
Her lips did mock the wine ;

The smile upon her bonny cheek
Was sweeter than the bee ;
Her voice excell'd the birdie's sang
Upon the birchen tree.

Sae couthie, couthie did she look,
And mickle had she fleech'd ;
Out shot his hand—alas ! alas !
Fast in the swirl he screech'd.

The mermaid laugh'd, her brief was gane,
And kelpie's blast was blawin',
Fu' low she douk'd, ne'er rase again,
For deep, deep was the fawin'.

Aboon the stream his wraith was seen,
Warlocks tirl'd lang at gloamin' ;
That e'en was coarse, the blast blew hoarse,
Ere lang the waves were foamin'.



CLERK COLVILL

CLERK Colvill and his lusty dame
Were walking in the garden green ;
The belt around her middle jimp,
It cost Clerk Colvill pounds fifteen.

“ O promise me now, Clerk Colvill,
Or it will cost ye mickle strife,
Ride never by the wells of Slane,
If ye wad live and brook your life.”—

“ Now speak nae mair, my lusty dame,
Now speak nae mair of that to me ;
For I ne’er did see a fair woman,
That I did like sae weel as thee.”

He’s ta’en his leave o’ his gay lady,
Nought minding what his lady said,
And he’s rode by the wells of Slane,
Where washing was a bonny maid.

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

“Wash on, wash on, my bonny maid,
That wash sae clean your sark o’ silk ;”—
“And weel fare you, fair gentleman,
Your body whiter than the milk.”

Then loud, loud cried the Clerk Colvill,
“O my head it pains me sair ;”—
“Then take, then take,” the maiden said,
“And frae my sark you’ll cut a gair.”

Then she’s gied him a little bane-knife,
And frae her sark he cut a share ;
She’s tied it round his whey-white face,
But aye his head it achèd mair.

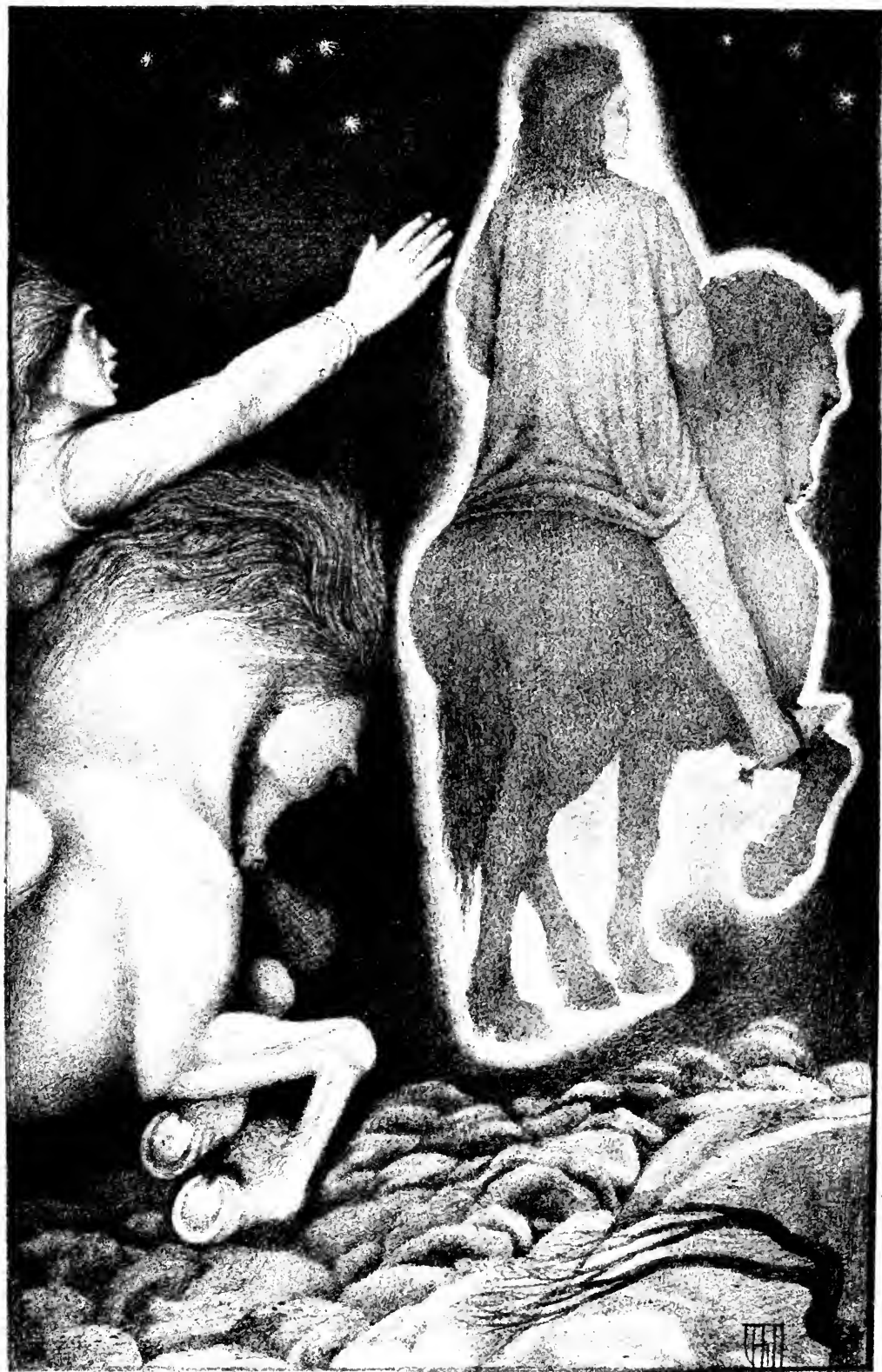
Then louder cried the Clerk Colvill :
“O sairer, sairer aches my head ;”—
“And sairer, sairer ever will,”
The maiden laugh’d, “till you be dead.”

Out then he drew his shining blade,
Thinking to stick her where she stay’d,
But she was vanish’d to a fish,
And swam far off, a fair mermaid.

Clerk Colvill

He's mounted on his berry-brown steed,
And dowie, dowie rade he hame,
And heavily, heavily lighted down,
When to his lady's bower he came.

“O mither, mither, braid my hair ;
My lusty lady, make my bed ;
O brother, take my sword and spear,
For I hae seen the fause mermaid.”





SIR ROLAND

WHEN he came to his ain love's bower,
He tirlèd at the pin,
And sae ready was his fair fause love
To rise and let him in.

"O welcome, welcome, Sir Roland," she says,
"Thrice welcome thou art to me ;
For this night thou wilt feast in my secret bower,
And to-morrow we'll wedded be."—

"This night is Hallowe'en," he said,
"And to-morrow is Hallowday ;
And I dream'd a dreary dream yestreen,
That has made my heart fu' wae.

"I dream'd a dreary dream yestreen,
And I wish it may come to gude ;
I dream'd that ye slew my best grewhound,
And gied me his lapper'd blude."

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

“Unbuckle your belt, Sir Roland,” she said,

“And set you safely down.”—

“O your chamber is very dark, fair maid,

And the night is wondrous lown.”—

“Yes, dark, dark is my secret bower,

And lown the midnight may be ;

For there is none waking in a' this tower,

But thou, my true-love, and me.”

.

She has mounted on her true-love's steed,

By the ae light of the moon ;

She has whippèd him and spurred him,

And roundly she rade frae the toun.

She hadna ridden a mile frae the gate,

A mile but barely ane,

When she was aware of a tall young man,

Slow riding o'er the plain.

She turn'd her to the right about,

Then to the left turn'd she,

And aye, 'tween her and the wan moonlight,

That tall knight did she see.

Sir Roland

And he was riding burd-alane
On a horse as black as jet ;
But, though she follow'd him fast and fell,
No nearer could she get.

“O stop ! O stop ! young man,” she said,
“For I in dule am dight ;
O stop, and win a fair lady's love,
If ye be a leal true knight.”

But nothing did the tall knight say,
And nothing did he blin ;
Still slowly rade he on before,
And fast she rade behind.

She whipp'd her steed, she spurr'd her steed,
Till his breast was all a-foam ;
But nearer to that tall young knight,
By Our Lady, she could not come.

“O if ye be a gay young knight,
As well I trow you be,
Pull tight your bridle reins, and stay
Till I come up to thee.”

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

But nothing did that tall knight say,
And no whit did he blin,
Until he reach'd a broad river's side,
And there he drew his rein.

"O is this water deep?" he said,
"As it is wondrous dun;
Or is it sic as a sackless maid
And a leal true knight may swim?"—

"The water it is deep," she said,
"As it is wondrous dun;
But it is sic as a sackless maid
And a leal true knight may swim."

The knight spurr'd on his tall black steed;
The lady spurr'd on her brown;
And fast they rade into the fleed,
And fast they baith swam down.

"The water weets my tae," she said;
"The water weets my knee;
Haud up my bridle reins, sir knight,
For the sake of Our Ladie."—

Sir Roland

“If I should help thee now,” he said,
 “‘T were a deadly sin,
For I have sworn ne’er to trust a fair may’s word,
 Till the water weets her chin.”—

“O the water weets my waist,” she said,
 “Sae does it weet my skin ;
And my aching head rins round about,
 The burn makes sic a din.

“The water is waxing deeper still,
 Sae does it wax mair wide ;
And aye the farther we ride on,
 Farther off is the other side.

“O help me now, thou fause, fause knight,
 Hae pity on my youth,
For now the water jows o’er my head,
 And it gurgles in my mouth.”

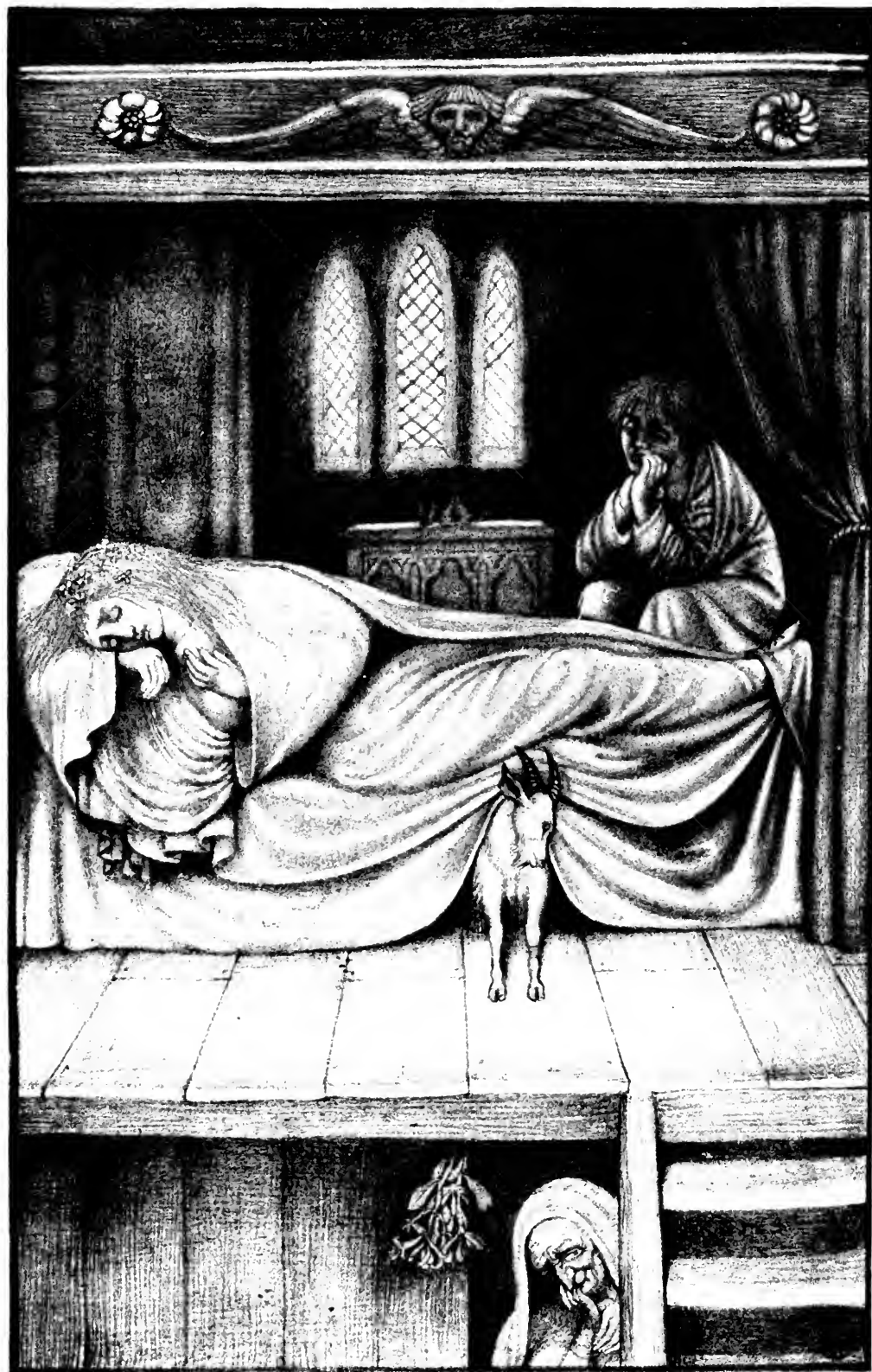
The knight turn’d right and round about,
 All in the middle stream ;
And he stretch’d out his hand to that lady,
 But loudly she did scream.

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

“O this is Hallow-morn,” he said,
“And it is your bridal day ;
But sad would be that gay wedding,
If the bridegroom were away.

“Then ride on, ride on, proud Margaret,
Till the water comes o’er your bree ;
For the bride maun ride deep, and deeper yet,
That rides this ford wi’ me.

“Turn round, turn round, proud Margaret,
Turn round, and look on me ;
Thou hast kill’d a true knight under trust,
And his ghost now links wi’ thee.”



WILLY'S LADY

WILLY has ta'en him o'er the faem,
He's woo'd a wife, and brought her hame;
He's woo'd her for her yellow hair,
But his mither wrought her mickle care;

And mickle dolour gar'd her dree,
For lighter she can never be;
But in her bower she sits wi' pain,
And Willy mourns o'er her in vain.

And to his mither he has gane,
That vile rank witch of vilest kind.

He says, "My lady has a cup,
Wi' gowd and silver set about;
This goodly gift shall be your ain,
And let her be lighter of her bairn."—

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

“Of her bairn she’ll never be lighter,
Nor in her bower to shine the brighter;
But she shall die, and turn to clay,
And you shall wed another may.”—

“Another may I’ll ne’er wed nane,
Another may I’ll ne’er bring hame;”
But, sighing, says that weary wight,
“I wish my life were at an end!”—

“Yet gae ye to your mither again,
That vile rank witch of vilest kind,
And say your lady has a steed,
The like of him’s no in the lands of Leed.

“For at ilka tett o’ that horse’s mane,
There’s a gowden chess, and a bell to ring;
This goodly gift shall be her ain,
And let me be lighter of my bairn.”—

“Of her bairn she’ll never be lighter,
Nor in her bower to shine the brighter;
But she shall die, and turn to clay,
And you shall wed another may.”—

Willy's Lady

"Another may I'll ne'er wed nane,
Another may I'll ne'er bring hame ;"
But, sighing, says that weary wight,
"I wish my life were at an end !"—

"Yet gae ye to your mither again,
That vile rank witch of vilest kind,
And say your lady has a girdle,
It's a' red gowd unto the middle,

"And aye, at ilka siller hem,
Hang fifty siller bells and ten ;
This goodly gift shall be her ain,
And let me be lighter of my bairn."—

"Of her bairn she'll never be lighter,
Nor in her bower to shine the brighter ;
But she shall die, and turn to clay,
And you shall wed another may."—

"Another may I'll ne'er wed nane,
Another may I'll ne'er bring hame ;"
But, sighing, says that weary wight,
"I wish my life were at an end !"

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

Then out and spake the billy-blin,
And he spake out in very good time :

“Yet gae ye to the market-place,
And there buy ye a loaf of wace ;
Ye’ll shape it bairn and bairnly like,
And in’t twa glassen een ye’ll put ;

“And bid her your boy’s christ’nin’ to,
Then notice weel what she shall do ;
And do you stand a little away,
And notice weel what she will say.”

He did him to the market-place,
And there he bought a loaf of wace ;
He shaped it bairn and bairnly like,
And in’t twa glassen een he put.

He did him to his mither then,
And bade her to his boy’s christ’nin’ ;
And he did stand a little away,
And noticed weel what she did say.

Willy's Lady

“ O wha has loos'd the nine witch-knots,
That were amang that lady's locks?
And wha's ta'en out the kames o' care,
That were amang that lady's hair?

“ And wha has ta'en down that bush o' woodbine,
That hung between her bower and mine?
And wha has kill'd the master kid,
That ran beneath that lady's bed?
And wha has loos'd her left foot shee,
And let that lady lighter be?”

Syne Willy's loos'd the nine witch-knots,
That were amang that lady's locks;
And Willy's ta'en out the kames o' care,
That were amang that lady's hair;

And he's ta'en down the bush o' woodbine,
Hung atween her bower and the witch carline;
And he has killed the master kid,
That ran beneath that lady's bed;

Ballads Weird and Wonderful

And he has loos'd her left foot shee,
And let that lady lighter be ;
And now he has gotten a bonny son,
And mickle grace be him upon.

GLOSSARY

<i>Aboon</i> , above	brief was out," the spell was
<i>Ae</i> , one, only	cast
<i>Aff</i> , off	<i>Brig</i> , bridge
<i>Aik</i> , oak	<i>Brook</i> , possess, enjoy
<i>Ain</i> , own	<i>Burd</i> , young lady, maiden
<i>An</i> , if	<i>Burd-alane</i> , entirely alone, all
<i>Ask</i> , newt, lizard	alone
<i>Aught</i> , owned	<i>Byre</i> , cow-house
<i>Ava</i> , of all	
<i>Awa'</i> , away	<i>Care</i> , mountain ash
	<i>Carline</i> , an old peasant woman
<i>Ba'</i> , ball	<i>Carp</i> , to recite as a minstrel
<i>Baith</i> , both	<i>Channering</i> , fretful
<i>Bane</i> , bone	<i>Chess</i> , jess, leather strap for a
<i>Ben</i> , in, inside	hawk's leg
<i>Billy</i> , brother	<i>Christentie</i> , Christendom
<i>Billy-blin</i> , a household sprite or	<i>Claes</i> , clothes
brownie, who performs kind	<i>Cleed</i> , to clothe
services at night	<i>Cleeding</i> , clothing
<i>Birk</i> , birch	<i>Coft</i> , bought
<i>Birl</i> , to pass bread and wine	<i>Corbie</i> , raven
round the company	<i>Couthie</i> , kind, affable
<i>Blin</i> , stop	<i>Croodle</i> , to coo like a dove
<i>Bower</i> , chamber	<i>Croodlin' doo</i> , 'cooing dove,' a
<i>Brae</i> , bank, hillside	term of endearment
<i>Brand</i> , sword	
<i>Braw</i> , smart, handsome	<i>Dang</i> , pret. of 'ding' (<i>q.v.</i>)
<i>Bree</i> , brow	<i>Dauntin</i> , intimidate
<i>Brief</i> , a spell, charm. "The	<i>Daw</i> , dawn

Glossary

<i>Dee</i> , die ; do	<i>Gae, gang</i> , to go. ' <i>Gang by the hauld,</i> ' walk by holding on to the hand
<i>Dight</i> , dressed	<i>Gair</i> , gore, a triangular strip of cloth, &c., inserted at the bottom of a garment
<i>Ding</i> , to beat, surpass	<i>Gar</i> , to make, cause, compel
<i>Dought</i> , pret. of 'dow' (<i>q.v.</i>), could	<i>Gie</i> , give
<i>Douk</i> , to duck, dive	<i>Gin</i> , if
<i>Dow</i> , to be able to. Generally used with a negative	<i>Gliss</i> , to shine, gleam, glisten
<i>Dowie</i> , doleful	<i>Glistering</i> , shining, glittering
<i>Dree</i> , to endure, suffer	<i>Gowany</i> , covered with daisies
<i>Drumly</i> , dark, gloomy	<i>Gowd</i> , gold
<i>Dule</i> , sorrow, grief, misfortune	<i>Gravat</i> , cravat
<i>Dun</i> , of a yellowish-brown colour	<i>Greet</i> , to cry, weep, lament
<i>Ee</i> , eye ; <i>een</i> , eyes	<i>Grewhound</i> , greyhound
<i>Eerie</i> , weird, uncanny ; haunted by spirits	<i>Grumly</i> , fault-finding, grumbling, irritable
<i>Elritch</i> , unearthly, frightful	<i>Gude</i> , good
<i>Even cloth</i> , smooth cloth, evenly shorn	<i>Gurly</i> , rough, boisterous, stormy
<i>Fadge</i> , a fat, clumsy woman	<i>Hae</i> , have
<i>Faem</i> , foam, the sea	<i>Hallowday</i> , All Saints' Day, Nov. 1
<i>Fail</i> , turf ; <i>fail-dyke</i> , a wall or fence built of turf	<i>Hallowe'en</i> , the eve of All Saints' Day, Oct. 31
<i>Fand</i> , found	<i>Hap</i> , to cover, enwrap
<i>Fauld</i> , fold	<i>Harp</i> , to play the harp
<i>Fause</i> , false	<i>Haud</i> , hold
<i>Fawin'</i> , falling	<i>Hause-bane</i> , collar-bone
<i>Fell</i> , eagerly	<i>Hie</i> , high
<i>Fere</i> , companion, comrade	<i>Hing</i> , hang
<i>Ferlie</i> , a wonder, marvel	<i>Honey-mark</i> , a mole on the skin
<i>Fleech</i> , to wheedle, coax, cajole	<i>Hawk</i> , to hollow out by digging
<i>Fleed</i> , flood, river	<i>Ilka</i> , each, every
<i>Frae</i> , from	
<i>Fresh</i> , a flood, the overflowing of a river or stream	

Glossary

<i>Jimp</i> , slender, elegant	cipice over which the water falls
<i>Jow</i> , to surge, dash in waves	
<i>Kame</i> , a comb	<i>Lithe</i> , agile, active
<i>Kelpie</i> , a water-spirit, "who gives previous intimation of the destruction of those who perish within his jurisdiction, by preternatural lights and noises, and even assists in drowning them"	<i>Loof</i> , the palm of the hand
<i>Kemb</i> , to comb	<i>Loup</i> , to leap
<i>Ken</i> , to know	<i>Lout</i> , to stoop, bend, bow
<i>Kep</i> , to intercept, stop	<i>Lown</i> , quiet, calm, silent
<i>Kilt</i> , to tuck up the skirts	<i>Lyke-wake</i> , the watch held over the dead between the time of death and burial
<i>Kirtle</i> , a woman's outer petticoat or short skirt	
<i>Kist</i> , a chest, coffin	<i>Mair</i> , more
<i>Kye</i> , cows, kine	<i>Make</i> , companion, consort, 'mate'
	<i>Martinmas</i> , St. Martin's Day, Nov. 11
<i>Laith</i> , loath, reluctant	<i>Maun</i> , must
<i>Lap</i> , pret. of 'leap'	<i>May</i> , maid
<i>Lappered</i> , clotted, congealed	<i>Mickle</i> , much, great
<i>Lave</i> , to bathe	<i>Mirk</i> , dark, gloomy
<i>Leal</i> , upright, honest	<i>Mools</i> , mould, earth of a grave
<i>Lee</i> , lie	<i>Muir</i> , moor
<i>Lee light</i> , the word 'lee' has here an indefinite intensive force, with the connotation of loneliness	
<i>Leman</i> , lover, sweetheart	<i>Neist</i> , next
<i>Leven</i> , a lawn, glade, open ground in a forest	<i>Norland</i> , north
<i>Lilly</i> , lovely, charming	<i>Nourice</i> , nurse
<i>Limber</i> , supple, nimble	<i>Nourice-fee</i> , the wages given to a wet nurse
<i>Linn</i> , a waterfall, the rock or pre-	
	<i>Owsen</i> , oxen
	<i>Pall</i> , a rich or fine cloth
	<i>Pike</i> , to pick
	<i>Plea</i> , quarrel, strife, wrangling
	<i>Plum</i> , a deep pool in a stream
	<i>Preen</i> , to dress up, deck oneself out

Glossary

<i>Prink</i> , to dress smartly or gaudily	<i>Shoon</i> , shoes
<i>Pu'</i> , pull	<i>Sic</i> , such
	<i>Siller</i> , silver
<i>Quo'</i> , quoth	<i>Sin'</i> , since
	<i>Skerrie</i> , an isolated rock in the sea
<i>Rade</i> , rode, pret. of 'ride'	<i>Skinkle</i> , to sparkle, shine
<i>Rase</i> , rose, pret. of 'rise'	<i>Snell</i> , cold, piercing, keen
<i>Rede</i> , to advise; advice	<i>Stithe</i> , place, station
<i>Rive</i> , to split asunder, cleave	<i>Stout</i> , haughty
<i>Row</i> , to wrap up, 'roll'	<i>Streek</i> , to lay out a dead body
	<i>Syke</i> , a small rill, especially one which runs dry in summer
<i>Sackless</i> , guiltless, innocent	<i>Syne</i> , afterwards, next in point of time
<i>Sain</i> , to make the sign of the cross; thus, 'to be sained,' to be baptized	
<i>Sair</i> , sore	<i>Taffetie</i> , figured silk
<i>Sall</i> , shall	<i>Tane</i> , that one
<i>Sark</i> , shirt	<i>Teind</i> , tithe
<i>Saul</i> , soul	<i>Tett</i> , a lock or tuft of hair
<i>Saut</i> , salt	<i>Theek</i> , to thatch
<i>Scant</i> , scarcely	<i>Thie</i> , thigh
<i>Scug</i> , to expiate	<i>Thimber</i> , gross, heavy, cumbrous
<i>Sealchie</i> , a seal	<i>Thraw</i> , to twist, contort, 'throw'
<i>Seely court</i> , the fairy court, <i>lit.</i> the 'happy' court	<i>Tift</i> , a sudden breeze or gust of wind
<i>Set</i> , to make, cause, compel	<i>Tine</i> , the tooth of a harrow
<i>Shathmont</i> , six inches: the measure of the fist with the extended thumb	<i>Tirl</i> , to make a rattling sound, generally in the phrase ' <i>to tirl at the pin.</i> ' "Doors were formerly provided with a long, notched iron handle on which a loose iron ring was hung; instead of rousing the house with a knock, the caller tirl'd the ring up and down the notches of the
<i>Shee</i> , shoe	
<i>Sheen</i> , <i>adj.</i> , bright, shining, dazzling	
<i>Shelf</i> , a reef or rock beneath the water	
<i>Sheugh</i> , a small stream or open gutter running through land	
<i>Shimmer</i> , to shine	

Glossary

'tirling pin,' or handle, and produced the sound from which the apparatus took its name "	<i>Wake</i> , see <i>Lyke-wake</i>
<i>Tocherless</i> , without dowry	<i>Wame</i> , womb
<i>Toddle</i> , to walk with feeble, tottering steps	<i>Warlock</i> , wizard
<i>Tree</i> , wood	<i>Warsle</i> , to struggle, 'wrestle'
<i>Tryst</i> , (1) to engage to meet; to make an appointment to meet. (2) A meeting-place, rendezvous	<i>Wean</i> , child, infant
<i>Twal'</i> , twelve	<i>Weet</i> , to wet
<i>Twin</i> , to separate one from the other; to part, sever	<i>Weird</i> , fate, destiny
<i>Wa'</i> , wall	<i>Whin</i> , furze
<i>Wace</i> , wax	<i>Whinny-muir</i> , a furze-covered moor
<i>Wad</i> , would	<i>Wight</i> , creature, person, fellow
<i>Wae</i> , woe	<i>Win</i> , (1) to succeed, especially in getting to a place; (2) to earn or gain; (3) to go
<i>Waesome</i> , dolefully	<i>Winna</i> , will not
	<i>Witch-knot</i> , a matted lock of hair, supposed to be produced by witchcraft
	<i>Wraith</i> , spectre, apparition, ghost
	<i>Yestreen</i> , last night, 'yester-even'

PK 1181

C55

